

Hafa Adai!

Bautista now out of DPS 'missing list' **PAGE 6**

Over 5,000 birds are spotted in Christmas count. **PAGE 7**

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75¢

Mark Brown is out of IPI

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC chair and former chief executive officer Mark A. Brown has stepped down from his post, according to an email from the Hong Kong-based company.



Brown

Brown, who served as IPI's first CEO before moving on to serve as its chairman in 2016, was reportedly out of IPI since Dec. 20, 2017 according to documents obtained by *Saipan Tribune*. The documents specified that Brown reportedly left to pursue "stronger familial ties" in the U.S. mainland.

According to sources familiar with the matter, Brown reportedly left the
See MARK on Page 4

IPI, MCC enter agreement

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

MCC International and the U.S. Department of Labor reportedly entered a settlement agreement to address the remaining illegal Chinese workers that have been recently evicted from the dormitories where

they've been staying.

In a statement from Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, MCC International and the US-DOL have reportedly entered into an agreement to address the fates of the remaining six Chinese workers illegally recruited by IPI's main

See IPI on Page 4



High court affirms Ogumoro sentence

On Dec. 26, 2017, the CNMI Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Commonwealth v. Ambrosio T. Ogumoro*, 2017 MP 17. The high court affirmed the trial court's

sentencing and commitment order convicting Ambrosio T. Ogumoro of conspiracy to commit theft of services, theft of services, and misconduct in public office.

Ogumoro was charged for his involvement in a conspiracy to prevent FBI, Office of the Public Audit investigators, and other government

See COURT on Page 4

NEW EQUIPMENT

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Commissioner Claudio Norita, Attorney General Edward Manibusan, Gov. Ralph Torres, and Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero, all in front center, are surrounded by the men and women of DFEMS, DPS, and Chief Prosecutor Michelle Harris at the transfer of 40 fire extinguishers from DFEMS to DPS last Jan. 5 at the DPS parking lot

BEA CABRERA

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Malaysia has approved a new attempt to find Malaysia Airlines Flight 370.

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FOCUS

Iran's working class fuels further unrest due to their dim prospects.

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LIFE & STYLE

Hollywood's awards season is officially underway.

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A bi-weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority

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- **13th Annual Saipan Marathon**
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- **29th Tagaman Triathlon**
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www.saipantriathlon.com
- **Rota Coffee Marathon**
April 14
- **Flame Tree Arts Festival**
April 26-29
- **20th Annual Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden**
Every Saturday in May
- **Children's Shoreline Fishing Derby (Tinian)**
July 4-5
- **4th Annual International Festival of Cultures**
Every Saturday in September
- **IRONMAN 70.3 Saipan**
Oct. 27, 2018
www.ironman.com
- **Rota Blue Triathlon**
November
- **Marianas Beer & Barbeque Festival**
November (tentative)
- **Hell of the Marianas**
Dec. 1
- **17th Annual Christmas in the Marianas**
Every Saturday in December
- **Children's Christmas Caroling and Float Parade (Tinian)**
Dec. 8

Do you have a public event coming up in 2018? Share it with the community and visitors by posting on The Marianas Events Calendar at www.mymarianas.com.



Local

HOPE: For our community, for our people



From left to right, SAR Case Managers Becky Mettao, Alvin Tagabuel, and Taylor Ada.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The work that case managers Taylor Ada, Alvin Tagabuel, and Becky Mettao do for the CNMI's new Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation program is more than just a profession.

The three man the Hinemlu O'hala Para Enteramenti Recovery Center, or HOPE Recovery Center, sharing obstacles and triumphs within the program's therapeutic process and how it transcends a standard 7:30am to 4:30pm job.

"One day at a time comes to mind when I think of addiction recovery. Every single day is another chance at life, and another chance to make things better," Ada said.

Addiction recovery isn't all about learning how to stop the addiction of substances, she said. "It's learning how to cope and manage so you can get through your everyday life and know that it's easier to not use or go back down that road."

For Tagabuel, the journey is also one of self-evaluation. "Working with our participants has opened me up to see their struggles from their perspective, and it has made me change a lot of my opinions about addiction. This journey has opened me up to a whole new outlook on how to help those who are struggling with addiction."

Being that the recovery center is still a new program, there are still a lot of bumps in the road.

"It is not an easy task to start something that has never been done in our community, but with the help and guidance of those above me, I am steadily progressing forward on this journey to make our community a better place for our children," Tagabuel added.

In her capacity, Mettao said that, like any other journey in life, time is of the essence.

"Just like any other journey in life, this takes time and requires effort. The one thing that keeps me going is truly the journey that our clients are on," she said.

Being able to see the changes that clients go through, Mettao said, the casework has been really heartwarming as changes happen within the families as well.

"Patience is very important because we need to be able to work with time rather than against it. As part of the Commonwealth's first rehabilitation center, things will take time and we will encounter more changes than expected.

As long as we keep our mind on the goal, all the accomplishments and hardships become worth it."

Working with clients from a variety of backgrounds for the past six months, Ada added that recovery work is invaluable.

"This program is ours... for our community and our people... We've already seen change in our participants in such a short time, which is truly amazing. Although we've been there to help, all the work and progress has been done by them," she said.

Reiterating the sentiments of Reuben Chong, the center's certified substance abuse counselor and licensed clinical social worker, Ada noted that the true success of treatment begins with full utilization beyond the center.

Ada said that "we're never going through the battle alone and when we're ready, there are people who are willing to help and fight with you."

"Our lead clinician likes to say that our goal is to work ourselves out of a job. It is the ultimate hope that there may come a time where those affected by addiction have all been helped and no longer need our services," Tagabuel said.

Realistically, Mettao said there is hope and clients can continue to see success. Recalling a story focused on resiliency, Ada said that change must come from within.

Mettao emphasized that a community struggling with addiction needs to be proactive.

See HOPE on Next Page



LOTTERY PACIFIC GOLD

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HOPE

From Page 2

"We are a very new program but there are beautiful changes already taking place. What I hope for the community is for them to continue to have hope."

"If you want change, you have to make it happen. It is not easy, but life is so precious and has so much to offer...when you're ready to be honest with yourself and those around you and are ready for change, help is available," she said.

"If you know someone who is struggling with addiction, do something about it. Show them some tough love by providing pamphlets or contact numbers of available services so that they're aware, push them to get help, transport them if need be—do whatever you need to do get them to take the first step in their road to recovery," she said.

With all these experiences as a young caseworker, the work is a very humbling experience, Tagabuel said.

"I get to see the program develop and see it improve the quality of life in our little community. I think of a person who is struggling internally and it's a struggle between applying the skills for recovery against the old habits that the addict is trying to get away from," he said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The HOPE Recovery Center is staffed 24 hours a day and has recently completed four more three-bedroom building for safe and sober living with participants from the general public.

This struggle is not something that will go away overnight.

"It is lifelong," Tagabuel said, "but I am positive that with the right treatment and support, a person can stay sober for a long period of time."

Tagabuel said that participants who come to the center willing to take the initial step for recovery are stronger than they realize.

"You are not alone. Whatever your struggle is, there are people out there that are going through the same thing and have figured out ways to find healing. Yes, you would have to take the initiative to go out there and seek out the help, but once you get through that process and start

getting the help that you need, then you will start to

heal yourself."

At the end of the day, full recovery relies on the strength of the community, Ada said.

"This center is truly a great investment for the CNMI," she said, optimistic that our community will continue to move forward with recovery and help those who are truly in need.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres shares the three's sentiment

and passion for the program, noting that the work toward recovery is a labor of love.

"It's young people like Taylor, Alvin, and Becky that help move this essential program forward in order to achieve its critical mission. We, as a community, must continue to support our loved ones afflicted by substance and alcohol abuse. If you know anyone who needs help, please refer them to the drug court and this program. We are here to help our people keep that hope towards a better life for themselves and their

loved ones," Torres added.

Yvette Sablan, the special assistant for Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation, said that all services are free and the center holds excellent staff dedicated to the recovery of each and every participant.

The HOPE Recovery Center is staffed 24 hours a day and has recently completed four more three-bedroom building for safe and sober living with participants from the general public.

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Gigi Jones named state director for USDA RD

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Gigi Jones has been appointed as the new state director for USDA Rural Development in Hawaii and the Western Pacific.

Prior to her appointment as state director, Jones founded a grassroots effort known as Cool Our Keiki, a campaign focused on cooling Hawaii's overheated classrooms across the state.

Jones's diverse background

spans more than 20 years and covers many sectors including engineering, architecture, education, infrastructure improvements, healthcare, customer service, marketing and business development.

As state director, Jones will use her leadership experience to oversee Rural Development programs in a customer-focused manner to restore pros-

perity in rural Hawaii and the Western Pacific.

Under the direction of Secretary Sonny Perdue, the USDA will always be facts-based and data-driven, with a decision-making mindset that is customer-focused. Perdue leads the USDA with four guiding principles: to maximize the ability of American agriculture to create jobs, sell

foods and fiber, and feed and clothe the world; to prioritize customer service for the taxpayers; to ensure that our food supply is safe and secure; and to maintain good stewardship of the natural resources. Understanding that we live in a global economy where trade is of top importance, Perdue has pledged to advocate for American agriculture.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; home-

ownership; community services such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas.

For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. (PR)

Tinian to hold public meeting on CW issue

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A call to hold a public meeting among business owners and operators on Tinian is in order to talk about the prevailing issues that they are facing, especially after the decision of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to cut 3,000 slots from the CW-1 foreign worker program for fiscal year 2017.

According to Tinian Mayor Joey San Nicolas, they are looking at Jan. 10 to have the meeting at the Tinian Public Library, starting at 6pm. All Tinian businesses are encouraged to attend.

The meeting will focus on how each business has been or will be effected by the reduction of CW visas by 3,000 and the termination of

the program in 2019.

"We want to get an assessment of the degree our local businesses plan on downsizing or [possible] closure due the reduction in CW visas," he said. "This meeting will give us a true assessment about which companies are already struggling with the current cap levels."

The Tinian economy is composed mostly of small businesses that render necessary services not only on Tinian but also on Saipan and Rota.

"Because Tinian's local economy is mostly small businesses, the reduction of the CW visa program will have an immediate and devastating effect. We have already been notified by a few businesses that their applications for CW renewals have been denied," he said.

"JC Café, for example, which has been a landmark establishment on Tinian and the primary restaurant that services both our guests and community alike, has just informed us that 11 of their employees, which includes all of their cooks, have been denied visa renewals because of the 2017 cap," he added.

San Nicolas said that most small businesses are unsure of how they will deal with the reduction and eventual termination of the CW program.

"Many of them are not financially capable of seeking employment through alternative visa programs. We are feeling the impact of the current cap level and anticipate that the 3,000 additional reduction will result in the shutdown of these businesses," he said.

"This will obviously have an economic impact as, one, we will be collecting less revenue, and two, these small businesses support the tourism activity that flows through Tinian, leading to the further demise of the economy," he added.

San Nicolas said the position of the Tinian leadership is that the reduction of the CW and the eventual termination of the program will have a devastating effect on the island's economy.

"Extension is necessary until a long-term solution is found. These local businesses are seeking the assistance of public officials to provide a temporary remedy, if possible, or at least to provide information and guidance as to the future of the program," he said.

MARK

From Page 1

CNMI before the holidays of 2017.

In a statement, IPI said that Brown's decision to leave is respected.

"Imperial Pacific extends its deepest appreciation to Mr. Brown for his commitment to the company and wishes him well in all his future undertakings," the statement said.

"As Imperial Pacific's chairman, Mr. Brown assumed an active role in Imperial Pacific's fundraising activities and activities relating to the CNMI

government, including the Commonwealth Casino Commission. Mr. Brown's hard work and dedication to his duties as CEO and chairman have set a strong foundation for Imperial Pacific's future success in the CNMI."

Attempts to contact Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero over the weekend to obtain comments were not immediately answered.

In a brief interview with Joseph Reyes, vice chair of the casino commission, IPI has yet to inform them of Brown's resignation, though he mentioned he could be expecting

something today.

According to documents reportedly obtained from the CCC, the board was "proud" to have had Brown for the past three years.

"Mr. Brown's leadership and expertise were a major contribution to our success," the statement said, adding that after the completion of Best Sunshine Live, Brown distanced himself from day-to-day operations and focused on fundraising and Saipan governmental relations.

"During those past two years of working closely with the Saipan Casino Control Commission, Mr. Brown

forged deep bonds with the people of Saipan, and he will be greatly missed," said the statement, adding a brief note expressing their gratitude and wishing Brown well in his future endeavors.

As IPI's first CEO, Brown successfully launched IPI's first casino—the Best Sunshine Live—which was formerly situated at the T Galleria in Garapan.

Best Sunshine Live opened on July 26, 2017, and closed down last July 6, 2017, when the IPI Initial gaming facility was moved to its permanent gaming location at the Imperial Pacific Resort.

COURT

From Page 1

officials from serving a penal summons on former attorney general Edward T. Buckingham. He participated in forming an illegal police escort, misappropriating police services. In addition, Ogumoro neglected to serve the penal summons issued for Buckingham. The jury convicted Ogumoro of theft of services and conspiracy to commit theft of services, while the court convicted him of five counts of misconduct in public office and one count each of obstructing justice and criminal

coercion. Ogumoro appealed his convictions of Theft of services, conspiracy to commit theft of services, and misconduct in public office.

The Supreme Court reviewed Ogumoro's convictions. First, the high court examined whether Ogumoro was entitled to have the jury decide the misdemeanor theft of services and conspiracy to commit theft of services charges. Although the Supreme Court found that a change in law during pendency of the appeal would allow a court to examine potential issues for plain error, it determined there was no error in Ogumoro's case. It concluded the judge was cor-

rect in deciding the lesser included misdemeanor offenses, since Ogumoro had not produced substantial evidence of them so as to entitle him to the jury's consideration. Next, the high court considered whether there was sufficient evidence to convict Ogumoro of felony theft of services over \$250. The high court found the evidence produced was sufficient to show the services stolen were valued over \$250, upholding the conviction for felony theft. Third, the high court reviewed whether Ogumoro could be convicted of misconduct in public office for not serving Buckingham's penal summons. Ogumoro ar-

gued he had no duty to serve the penal summons because it was signed by the Superior Court clerk of court instead of by a judge. The high court reviewed the policies underlying the Commonwealth's laws and procedures regarding police officers' duties to serve warrants and penal summonses, concluding officers could only refuse to serve these documents in limited circumstances, none of which were present.

As a result, the high court affirmed Ogumoro's convictions. The high court's full opinion is available at <http://www.cnmilaw.org/supreme17.html>. (PR)

IPI

From Page 1

contractor, MCC International.

The statement said, though, that IPI was not aware of the terms surrounding the settlement agreement between MCC and the USDOL.

However the statement said that IPI remains "hopeful" that USDOL would soon address the amounts owed the remaining six workers on Saipan. "Imperial Pacific is not privy to the terms of the settlement agreement; however, Imperial Pacific is pleased that a settlement has been reached to settle the workers' claims," the statement said.

Saipan Tribune was informed of the settlement agreement after asking for a statement regarding the Chinese worker advocacy groups that have been reaching out to IPI. The Chinese worker advocacy groups have been urging IPI to address the wages owed the illegal workers.

Saipan Tribune learned over the weekend that the China Labor Bulletin, a non-governmental Chinese worker advocate group based in Hong Kong, sent a letter to IPI, urging the company to take care of the compensation owed the remaining six workers on Saipan.

The letter was addressed to Carman Chow of IPI.

"We are alarmed at [IPI's] attempts to shirk responsibility for the workers on its project and the attempts to place the blame on the project's subcontractors," stated the letter.

"[IPI] is ultimately responsible for the labor conditions and rights abuses that occur at its construction projects. It is disgraceful that workers have been pressured to return to China and pursue the money they are owed on their own," added the letter.

The letter is the second of two addressed to the same person at IPI. The first was from the China Labor Watch, another Chinese worker advocacy group that is based in New York. This non-governmental organization urged IPI to pay the workers based on the money owed them and pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act, which states that both the direct employer and the company that contracted them are equally responsible for their employee's wages.

Li Qiang, executive director of CLW, urged IPI to pay

the workers the amounts rightfully owed them, which she said should include extra due to provisions in the FLSA that claim employees who fail to receive their wages in a timely manner are entitled to liquidated damages.

IPI did not respond to *Saipan Tribune's* request for a statement regarding Li's letter nor did they confirm that they received both letters from the Chinese worker advocacy groups.

Both worker advocacy groups reached out to IPI after Hong Kong media reported on the situation of the Chinese workers.

Evicted from building

The six remaining Chinese workers moved out of their apartment in Garapan over the weekend. IPI had been paying for the dormitories "on humanitarian grounds."

In a letter late Nov. 2017, IPI legal representative Sean Frink informed the remaining workers that they had a month's time to accept IPI's offer to address their wages, which also included their repatriation to China. In the letter, Frink said that if the workers decline the offer or if they fail to respond, IPI's humanitarian support would cease and that IPI's payment offer would be withdrawn.

Also, in late November 2017, Metro Times LLC, the owner of the building that housed the workers, informed the six remaining workers that, after receiving confirmation that the investigation on their case is over, the workers had a month to move out.

A notice posted in the worker's dormitory by Metro Times informed the workers that electricity would be cut, any items found will be thrown out, and anyone still in there would be arrested for trespassing.

The notice was reportedly posted last Thursday evening.

The six reportedly declined the offer. The CNMI Department of Labor was involved in the calculations of their wages.

According to a source familiar with the Chinese workers, several of the workers have sought out the "cheapest living quarters" available, which includes a metal shack without access to hot water or a proper shower. The shack reportedly costs \$300 a month and the workers are reportedly paying with borrowed money.

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2018
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Bautista now out of DPS 'missing list'



By **BEA CABRERA**
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
com
REPORTER

The Filipino man who was reported missing last week is now considered out of the Department of Public Safety's missing list.

In a press release given out to the public last Thursday, DPS confirmed that Constante Bautista, who was reported missing

Bautista

by a family member, has already left Saipan.

DPS likewise received the confirmation from Customs Border and Protection, which mans the im-

migration counter at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, that Bautista left the island on Jan.y 2, 2018, to return to the Philippines.

DYS sees prior fiscal year as a success

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Division of Youth Services substantiated over 100 child service related cases in fiscal year 2017 and has served over 200 juveniles.

According to the data acquired from the Division of Youth Services, 180 cases were reported to the child protection unit in fiscal year 2017 that involved 429 children.

Of the children involved in these reported cases, 180 were victims and 237 were siblings of victims. The data also states that 215 of the children involved were females and 214 were males.

All these cases were considered substantiated and fought in court, with the exemption of 31 cases that were retracted by the victim or unsubstantiated, and two pending cases.

Cases reported and substantiated include emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, etc. A single report may include multiple cases.

DYS has also served a total of 230 juveniles under the juvenile probation unit in fiscal year 2017. Data acquired from DYS states that 33 of the juveniles that were assisted were females and 197

were male.

The juvenile alleged offenses DYS has dealt with this last fiscal year includes assault and battery, arrest warrant, assault, assault with a dangerous weapon, bench warrant, burglary, contempt of court order, criminal mischief, criminal trespass, disturbing the peace, domestic violence, illegal possession of a controlled substance, minor consuming alcohol, obstructing justice, riot, robbery, shoplifting, theft, and theft of a vehicle. A single juvenile may have multiple offenses under their belt.

According to DYS administrator Vivian Sablan, she feels that the division and her staff were effective in fiscal year 2017 because fewer cases were filed in general compared to previous years.

Sablan also said FY 2017 was a successful year for DYS because they were able to cater not only to the needs of the youth of the Commonwealth, but also to numerous parents and individuals through DYS' parent education services and community services.

The parent education service was able to reach out to 305 individuals while the community awareness service was able to reach out to 476 individuals.

DFEMS gives DPS fire extinguishers

By **BEA CABRERA**
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Being the first responder to any emergency in the CNMI, the Department of Public Safety is now equipped with fire extinguishers that police officers could use.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services donated a total of 40 fire extinguishers to DPS, with the initial donation made last Dec. 28, 2017, and recently, last Jan. 5, 2018.

Of the 40, a total of 30 would be distributed on Saipan, five would go to Tinian, and five would go to Rota.

According to DFEMS Commissioner Claudio Norita, the fire extinguishers will equip DPS with the necessary tool in their daily operations.

"The fire extinguishers are meant to be installed in their new patrol cars that they recently rolled out. This is a move by [DFEMS] to enable us to work with first responder partners like DPS, Patrol, and Traffic. In any 911 call, they [police officers] are really the first to respond and be at the scene," he said. "Having this equipment or this tool will enable them to suppress and take care of the problem if it's just a small fire. If it's a bigger fire, [they] at least have the capability to contain the fire while bigger trucks respond to the fire scene. It is an essential tool and we are glad that our partnership with DPS is always there."

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was in attendance during the transfer. "We are here in full

support of the transfers and having this kind of collaboration with the different departments where one department helps other departments goes a long way," he said.

"Equipment like fire extinguishers are important tools in case of emergencies that you don't know how important it is in case someone needs it. We appreciate all the efforts of DFEMS and DPS," he added.

DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero said the fire extinguishers will not only assist the officers in suppressing fire when they arrive at the scene.

"It's also a good safety device for the vehicles. We have instances where vehicles catch fire so we extend our thank you to DFEMS," he said.

Attorney General Edward Manibusan said that in this exchange, it is ultimately the people of the Commonwealth who will greatly benefit.

Norita said that there has always been a good collaboration between DFEMS and DPS.

"When the DPS commissioner and I sat down a few months ago, we talked about issues on what our departments need. Budgeting is a problem but we still come together and work out ways on how to help each other. Continuous collaboration is key," he said. "Next step is our [DFEMS] instructors will teach Patrol and Traffic officers how to use the fire extinguishers. Although it's common sense, we require them to get certified and that takes just a couple of hours training."



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com
Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

AMENDED NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-001-18
SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 08, 2018 TIME: 2:00 P.M.
"LEASE AND IMPROVEMENT OF ECHO DOCK"
PORT OF SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

THE PROPOSAL PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING NOVEMBER 22, 2017.

PROPOSERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND THREE (3) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED: **CONFIDENTIAL "LEASE AND IMPROVEMENT OF ECHO DOCK (RFP-001-18)"**. PROPOSERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS PROPOSAL. ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT THE CPA ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR OF THE ARRIVAL TERMINAL BY JANUARY 08, 2018 AT 2:00 P.M..

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

/s/ **CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2017



Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

SECURITY SERVICES INVITATION FOR BIDS NMC IFB 18-001

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement of Security Services for the As Terlaje Campus, Saipan.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing Wednesday, December 6th, 2017 between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

Bid Submissions are due no later than 10:00 A.M, January 08, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. In accordance with Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is available to local businesses for this procurement.

For Bidders located outside of the CNMI: May request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this Invitation For Bids (IFB), if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

Approved by:

/s/ **Anita Camacho**
NMC Procurement Manager

A Land Grant Institution accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and by The Senior Commission for Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges



The Office of the Mayor, Municipality of Rota, will hold a public information meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 06:00 p.m at the Rota Roundhouse in Songsong Village and on Friday, January 19, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at the Rota Courthouse in Sinapalo Village. The purpose of the meetings will be to review the Municipality of Rota's proposed USDA Rural Business Development Grant application.

The grant will be used to conduct a feasibility study to determine the viability of a Giant Clam Aquaculture Facility on the island. The public is cordially invited to attend this meeting and comment on the proposed project.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MVA-RFP-18-2008

For: HAPPY CHILDREN IN PARADISE CAMPAIGN 20th ANNIVERSARY SAIPAN-DA BACKPACKS

Submission /Closing Date: **January 22, 2018** Time: **3:00 p.m.**

Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building
Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **December 18, 2017, at the Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by January 22, 2018, and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA/ Ms. Brenda Repeki in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a **Notice of Intent** by any mode of written communication including facsimile at +1-670-664-3237 or email to brepeki@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **January 22, 2018**.

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Ms. Brenda Repeki at brepeki@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on January 5, 2018**.

/s/ Christopher J. Nelson
Acting Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

Over 5,000 birds are spotted in Christmas count

Over a dozen people in the CNMI took part in the national Christmas Bird Count over the holidays, resulting in over 5,000 birds of various species being included in the count in the Marianas.

According to Division of Fish and Wildlife biologist Steve Mullin, there were 19 individuals and a group of students who took part in

the Christmas Bird Count, more popularly known as the Audubon Christmas Count, last Dec. 22.

As of Jan. 4, DFW has yet to finalize the exact number of birds that were counted

but Mullin estimates the number at over 5,000.

"I am still waiting for two more data sheets from people that were helping out but

we're at about 5,000 right now," he said.

The CNMI has been conducting the bird count for over 25 years but it has been done in the United States for about 118 years.

Mullin said the count is an opportunity for the public to help scientist conserve the dozens of bird species in the Commonwealth while also

learning about each of them.

Mullin, who has been with DFW for the past three years, said that even at the 5,000 mark, it is already more than the last year's count of 4,500 and about equal to the amount counted the year before.

"That's a pretty good number. That's more than we had last year and very similar to the amount the year before that," he said.

Mullin said that all the volunteers were paired with an individual from DFW who were familiar with the bird count and are familiar with the types of birds in the Marianas.

"Everyone that participated

who were volunteers were teamed up with someone who knows the birds very well and, by doing that, they can help with the survey and learn about the birds at the same time," said Mullin.

Each pair was assigned a specific place on the island so that as much ground as possible was covered during the count without confusion and double-counting in one area.

"They get an area and then they move along the area in a structured way where they're not spending too much time in an area...it's systematic," he said.

Mullin said the count was as

successful as it has been in previous years because there are always new groups of people who are interested in joining the count and learning about the birds in the Marianas.

"We had several volunteers come out who were not here before and they seemed to enjoy it, they learned a lot, and that is one of the main reasons why we do it," he said.

Volunteers met at the American Memorial Park as early as 6am to start the count.

It is called the Christmas Bird Count because it is usually done on Dec. 25. This year, DFW held it on Dec. 22, 2017. *(Kimberly A. Bautista)*

AG: Fugitives cannot hide in the CNMI

Attorney General Edward Manibusan has assured that his office is on top of ensuring that criminals won't look at the CNMI as a possible haven where fugitives from justice can enter and hide.

This comes in the wake of the recent extradition of Sean McDonnell to Illinois to face charges of criminal sexual assault and predatory criminal sexual assault of a child.

McDonnell, who arrived in the CNMI last October, was immediately captured in a joint effort by the U.S. Marshalls and the Department of Public Safety.

On Dec. 29, 2017, McDonnell was extradited to Illinois, accompanied by two CNMI law enforcers where he will be facing the charges against him.

According to the Manibusan, criminals should not underestimate the CNMI law enforcement and justice system.

"They're mistaken as there are procedures and safeguards in place to ensure that people who come to the CNMI are people without any criminal background... We have the U.S. Immigration who has their own procedure, we have

Customs who do their investigations, we have our own local police that handle all of those things and we have other agencies that conduct investigations," he said.

"McDonnell is an example of how we can catch these people. We have access to National Crime Information Center and Interpol. The CNMI is not a place for people to hide because we will catch them," he added.

According to Manibusan, 2018 will be a year of strengthening ties and con-

ducting many trainings with law enforcements and other departments.

"The Attorney General's Office will continue to work with DPS to conduct more training for them that will assist in the prosecution of cases," he said.

"We have a lot of things going on in terms of consumer protection. There are number of things that we are considering and one is bringing new people to run different agencies with legal services," he added. *(Bea Cabrera)*

Scheduled power outage on Wed.

There will be a scheduled power interruption on Wednesday, Jan. 10, 2018, from 9am to 12pm.

The purpose of the power interruption is to de-energize the primary lines to allow the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. line crew to safely replace a rotted primary power pole along isa Drive in As Teo.

This is part of an ongoing maintenance program to strengthen and harden the integrity of the power distribution system throughout the island.

Areas to be affected include

Isa Drive, from the Kagman Mobil gas station to intersection of Chalan Santa Lourdes.

No water well, no traffic light, nor wastewater lift station will be affected.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, CUC asks travelers to take alternate routes or to exercise caution when driving through the affected areas.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. *(CUC)*

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLAND 96950
TEL.: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

THE FINANCIAL & INSURANCE
SERVICES GROUP, INC.
Plaintiff

CIVIL ACTION
NO. 13-0023

-v-
ALFONSO R. DELA CRUZ,
Defendant

SECOND AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on February 19, 2015, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: that certain tract or parcel of real property situated in DanDan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, designated as part of Lot 029 H 01 (H-169), more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a corner which is designated as Corner No. 1 having plane rectangular coordinates of 47,973.113 meters North and 51,968.913 meters east of the Mariana Islands coordinate system of 1966. Thence S 46° 55' 43" E, 22.315 meters to corner 2; Thence S 43° 04' 17" W, 42.213 meters to corner 3; Thence N 46° 55' 43" W, 26.450 meters to corner 4; Thence N 48° 40' 00" E, 42.415 meters to corner 1, the point of beginning, subject to survey;

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, February 2, 2018, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 2nd of January, 2018:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

ATTENTION Government Employees & Retirees!

The Island Smiles Dental Plan now available via your allotment

- **Low Cost:** \$5.00 (Individual Plan) \$6.00 (Two-Party Plan) or \$7.00 (Family Plan) per allotment. Least expensive dental plan in the CNMI
- Members receive at LEAST 20%-50% discounts on all dental procedures. No exceptions!
- **Plan Provider:** Paradise Dental Center. State-of-the art, full service General and Cosmetic dental clinic. Newest dental clinic and most experienced dentist in the CNMI. Really nice people!



Award-winning dentist
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Dr. Nelson Krum

Paradise Dental Center



Hawaii Dental Service, TakeCare & Staywell Insurances
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Call 234-4040

Middle Road, Gualo Rai, across Chong's

Stop by and pick up your enrollment packet or send
an email request to paradisidentalisaipan@gmail.com

"A Tradition of Excellence!"

Dr. Dennis Williams, a renowned eye surgeon, continues the tradition of excellence at Marianas Eye Institute.

- Received a CNMI House Resolution, "for conducting the CNMI's first Corneal Transplant"
- Listed in "Best Doctors in America"
- Board Certified Ophthalmologist

Prior Experience:

- Assistant Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology, USF
- Director of Corneal Transplant and Refractive Surgery St. Luke's Cataract and Laser Institute, Florida
- Board of Directors, American Board of Eye Surgery
- President, Cataract Teaching Foundation
- Instructor, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery

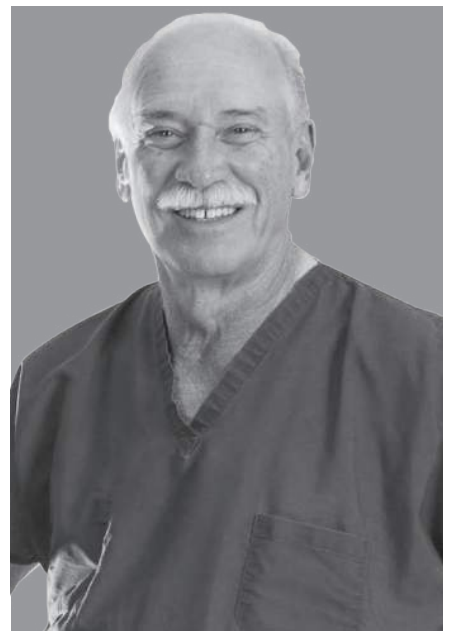
We welcome Aetna, Self-pay, Staywell, Netcare, Calvo's, TakeCare, Medicaid, Medicare, Tricare, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and more!



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235-9090

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Beach Road Garapan.



ONLY \$46

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- ONE DOUBLE BED ROOM/TWIN ROOM X 1 NIGHT
- WEEKEND HOLIDAY BUFFET LUNCH OR WEEKDAY EVENING MEAL WITH FREE BEER OR SOFT DRINKS X 2 PASSES PER ROOM PER NIGHT
- \$ 25 SLOT CLUB FREE PLAY VOUCHER X 1 PER ROOM PER NIGHT
- UNLIMITED GOLF COURSE PLAY
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Address: Next to Middle Rd McDonald's, Chalan Lau Lau.
Reservation Hotline: (670) 234 8718

LIMITATIONS:
EACH ROOM CAN ACCOMMODATE UP TO 2 ADULTS AND 1 CHILD

Sablan pleads guilty to killing his wife

A man accused of killing his wife in 2015 has pleaded guilty.

Sylvestre Sablan, charged with second-degree murder for killing his wife, Ana Maria Pialur Limes, in 2015, changed his "not guilty" plea to "guilty" last Wednesday.

Sablan was accompanied by his lawyer Douglas Har-

tig; the government was represented by Chief Prosecutor Michelle Harris.

Sablan said in court that his conscience led him to change his plea. The court, presided by Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio, accepted his guilty plea.

As stated in the minute order of the plea hearing, he

will be sentenced to 30 years in prison, five years of which will be suspended, with credit for time already served.

The Office of the Attorney General dropped the remaining charges against Sablan.

Sablan was arrested on Sept. 6, 2016, over the killing of Limes at their residence in Oleai in April 2015.

Limes was found dead inside her house in Oleai on April 20 shortly after noon. Police said that Limes showed signs of having been deceased for some time already, with fatal injuries to the head.

Sablan was served with an arrest warrant on charges of second degree murder, aggravated assault and battery,

and assault with dangerous weapon.

In a statement to media, assistant attorney general Teri Tenorio, who negotiated the plea terms for Sablan, said that this guilty plea gives some sense of closure for the family of Limes.

"The Office of the Attorney General has main-

tained regular communications with the family and, prior to finalizing the plea terms, we sought input and approval of this offer," she said. "While the family may never understand how Sylvestre Sablan could murder Ana, this plea agreement provides semblance of closure." **(Bea Cabrera)**

Nominees sought for MCS' AlumKnight of the Year



Mount Carmel School's 2017 AlumKnight of the Year was business pioneer Jesus V. "J. M." Deleon Guerrero, front, center, seen here with, from left, MCS AlumKnight Association vice chair Priscilla Dela Cruz, MCS board secretary Joe Pangelinan, MCS board vice chair Jacqueline Che, MCS board chair Vicente "Ben" Babauta, association treasurer Patrick Guerrero, AlumKnight Association secretary Rita Chong, AlumKnight Association chair Charles Cepeda, and MCS president Galvin Deleon Guerrero.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mount Carmel School is now accepting nominations for its annual AlumKnight of the Year award.

A few years ago, the school revised its annual Distinguished Graduate Award to be more inclusive for more AlumKnights, or alumni of the school. Renamed the AlumKnight of the Year, nominations for the prestigious award are open to AlumKnights who spent at least four consecutive years at the school.

School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero said this change helps the school honor many AlumKnights who,

for legitimate reasons, had to transfer to other schools.

"In some cases, AlumKnights spent over a decade at the school but had to transfer before graduation for family emergencies. Those AlumKnights, however, are still very loyal to their alma mater," he said. "We have this saying: Once a Knight, always a Knight. Changing the award in this way made that saying more meaningful to the entire AlumKnight family."

Each and every year since 1998, Mount Carmel School has granted the award to individuals who have distin-

guished themselves as leaders in business, government, and the community and who represent the school's trademark values of faith, excellence, and success.

The 2018 AlumKnight of the Year will be recognized, along with the AlumKnight Class of the Year, at the annual Knight with the Knights fundraising banquet, which will be the concluding event for Catholic Schools Week 2018. Tickets for the Night with the Knights are \$50 each and can be purchased at the school's business office or from AlumKnights. For more informa-

tion, call 234-6184 or email Priscilla Dela Cruz at presdelacruz@gmail.com.

All members of the community are invited to submit nominations for AlumKnight of the Year. The school's leadership team will screen nominees and select an awardee. The deadline for nominations is Friday, Jan. 19.

To submit a nomination, or for more information, email the school's director of institutional development, John Blanco, at mtcarmelknights@gmail.com, or Deleon Guerrero at galvin.deleonguerrero@gmail.com. **(PR)**



Mount Carmel School's 2015 AlumKnight of the Year Merced "Marcie" Tomokane, fourth from left, poses with her family at the 2015 Night with the Knights event.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Mount Carmel School's 2016 AlumKnight of the Year is professor Rose Cuison Villazor.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI high court: Evidentiary hearing was required...

On Dec. 30, 2017, the NMI Supreme Court issued its decision in *Commonwealth v. Castro*, 2017 MP 20, concluding the trial court abused its discretion when it denied Michael T. Castro's motion for an evidentiary hearing.

On the advice of his counsel, Castro, in the Commonwealth on a CNMI-Only Transitional Worker visa, entered a guilty plea to a charge of misdemeanor theft. After his release from the Department of Corrections, he was referred to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which commenced deportation proceedings based on his conviction. At that point, Castro filed a motion to withdraw his guilty plea, arguing ineffective assistance of counsel, and moved for an evidentiary hearing. The trial court denied his motions, finding he could not succeed on his ineffective assistance of counsel claim. Castro appealed.

On appeal, the Supreme Court, building on the standard it established in *Commonwealth v. Bashar*, 2015

MP 4, determined the trial court abused its discretion when it denied Castro's motion for an evidentiary hearing because the existing record was inadequate to resolve substantial issues of material fact.

Specifically, Castro's declaration and his trial counsel's declaration were contradictory and there was little other evidence to resolve the conflict. The high court concluded the trial court could not simply pick one declaration as being more credible than the other. Instead, it needed to hold an evidentiary hearing to assess the credibility of the witnesses.

Because the Supreme Court found it was an abuse of discretion for the trial court to deny Castro's motion for an evidentiary hearing, the Supreme Court did not reach Castro's other arguments. Instead, it vacated the trial court's order and remanded the case with instructions to hold an evidentiary hearing.

The high court's full opinion is available at <http://www.cnmilaw.org/supreme17.html>. **(PR)**

USAF seeks input for Tinian interpretive plan

HICKAM, Hawaii—The U.S. Air Force is seeking public input regarding the preparation of an Interpretive Plan for the World War II historic features of West Field, located on Tinian, north of the Tinian airport.

The Interpretive Plan is one of the commitments in a Programmatic Agreement between the U.S. Air Force, the CNMI's Historic Preservation Office, and the Advisory

Council on Historic Preservation to resolve adverse effects to historic properties that may result from the plan to create a divert airfield on Tinian.

A goal of the Interpretive Plan is the development of interpretive materials to tell the story of West Field and the units stationed there to include the 58th Bombardment Wing, 6th Naval Construction Brigade, 49th Naval Construction Regiment, and 29th Naval

Construction Regiment. The purpose is to provide the U.S. Air Force with a strategy to document and interpret extant historic features of West Field for the public.

The plan will discuss content and options for future interpretive products. Possible

products include, but are not limited to: signage at publicly accessible historic features, printed brochures, airport exhibits and/or displays and electronic products. These products will be produced in English, Chamorro, and other languages as

determined to be appropriate during the development.

The U.S. Air Force requests public input on the format and content of interpretive products. The U.S. Air Force will consider the comments received during the preparation of the plan. Those who wish to

provide input are encouraged to submit their comments to:

PACAF/PA
25 E Street, Suite G-108
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI 96853
ATTN: PACAF Divert EIS
Email comments to pacaf.paops@us.af.mil. **(PR)**

Water outage on Thursday

There will be a scheduled water service interruption starting from 8pm on Thursday, Jan. 11, to 8am on Friday, Jan. 12, in several areas on Saipan that that the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s contractor can install a new 18-inch gate valve. At the same time, CUC Water Division Operations personnel will be cutting and capping an old 6-inch ductile iron pipe at the Chalan Msgr. Martinez and As Perdido intersection near the Guandong Hardware.

The water outage will affect the As Lito, As Perdido, Fina Sis, Koblerville, San Antonio, Afetnas, Chalan Piao, Chaim Kanoa, Susupe, and Oleai areas.

The scope of work is to abandon an old waterline

that is prone to leaks to help reduce CUC's non-revenue water percentage.

There may be a possibility that some customers are still connected to the old line and may not receive water after water services are restored, so CUC is asking affected customers to contact the CUC Call Center immediately.

Due to the closure of the southbound lane and for the safety of the men and women working at the site, motorists are advised to proceed with caution and take alternative routes when traveling by the area.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. **(CUC)**

COLONIA, Yap—The blowing of the conch shell and the ceremonial transport of a wheel of stone money by a group of the island's locally-attired men will kick off the 50th anniversary of Yap Day that will be celebrated from Feb. 28 to March 1 at the Makiy site in Gagil Municipality.

On March 2, the Yap Day celebration will relocate to the Yap Living History Museum in Colonia for more indigenous activities.

The by-Yapese-for-Yapese event will be a three-day celebration featuring special guests, local food and customs, arts and handicrafts, skill demonstrations, traditional dances, canoe rides, games and prizes and much more. The final schedule of events will be announced at a later date.


For more information contact Arnold Yokbay Ken at (691) 350-2151 or email him at yokbayken@gmail.com or call Francis Itimai at (691) 350-2168. **(PR)**

Yap Day to celebrate 50th anniversary




JOYCE MCCLURE

A traditional stick dance is performed by these traditional Yap dancers. Traditional dances will be performed at the 50th Yap Day set from Feb. 28 to March 2, 2018.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CUC-RFP-18-009

ALTERNATIVE POTABLE DRINKING WATER DISINFECTION SYSTEM INSTALLATION

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the Alternative Potable Drinking Water Disinfection System Installation Project in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

General Description: This work consists of installation of alternative potable drinking water disinfection systems at five (5) potable drinking water disinfection points in the CNMI, one (1) on the island of Rota, one (1) on the island of Tinian, and three (3) on the island of Saipan. These systems will be evaluated as part of an expanded, one-year pilot-study of alternatives to chlorine gas disinfection. The contractor will be responsible for installation of the automated disinfection systems as well as provision of disinfectant products and any other necessary consumables during the one-year contract period.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$50.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and scope-of-service will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-18-009, Alternative Potable Drinking Water Disinfection System Installation" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **February 6, 2018 at 10:00 AM (CHST)**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A **Proposal Guarantee** of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A **Payment Bond** of one hundred (100%) percent and a **Performance Bond** of one hundred (100%) percent of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: <https://marianaslabor.net/>. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (CHST) on January 22, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nick Schreiner, CUC Water Engineer via email address nick.schreiner@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Assistant via email address marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer



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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

How much is your eyesight worth to you?

Spark Therapeutics recently launched a pioneering new drug that can improve the vision of patients with a rare hereditary form of vision loss. That's not the only thing that is pioneering about this drug, called Luxturna. Its price is, too. Spark announced this week that treatment will cost \$850,000 a patient. "We believe that price reflects the type of life-altering value we're seeing with Luxturna in clinical trials and will allow us to build on revolutionary science," Spark chief executive Jeff Marrazzo told *The Wall Street Journal*.

The company reportedly had considered setting the price even higher, at \$1 million.

Cue the usual howls from politicians and activists who rail against the high price of modern drugs and other treatments.

No doubt hoping to mute that chorus of critics, Spark says it will offer alternative payment arrangements to health insurers, including partial refunds if the drug doesn't work as advertised. The market of potential patients isn't huge: An estimated 1,000 to 2,000 Americans stand to benefit from this treatment, the company says.

But imagine you are one of those patients today. Imagine what Luxturna could mean to your life.

We're not here to celebrate nosebleed prices. But we do celebrate the genius that drives the development of such powerhouse drugs. And the free markets that allow companies to set prices so they reap profits from blockbuster drugs. Today's profits, of course, become the seed money for tomorrow's research on ... more new, perhaps miraculous, drugs.

The trouble with such medical miracles: They're not cheap. They never will be.

Developing drugs takes immense investments in time and money. Spark won't say how much it cost to develop Luxturna. But a 2014 report from Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development pegged the average cost of developing a new drug at \$2.6 billion. Many promising drugs fizzle without ever reaching the pharmacy shelf.

In recent years, U.S. spending on prescription drugs has rocketed. One reason: Drug companies continue to launch novel medicines that bring breakthrough therapies to treat an array of illnesses, from multiple sclerosis to several forms of cancer. Luxturna shares a dubious distinction with some of those drugs: Its price tag approaches \$1 million.

But remember, prescription drug makers face not only the failure of new products, but also fierce competition. They have a limited time to sell new products before lower-cost generic versions are allowed.

In 2016, President Barack Obama named Vice President Joe Biden to command an American "moon shot" to cure cancer. Obama didn't say how long it would take or how much it would cost. Some of the latest prescrip-

See HOW on Next Page



'Year' of the woman? We could do with an era

The telephone calls from reporters arrive like clockwork every January to the Center for American Women and Politics. "Is this going to be The Year of the Woman?" they want to know.

This month has been no different. Political reporters ascribe great significance to changes in the running tally of women in Congress, even though the number tends to shift in low single digits from one election to the next. Any gains, even one woman added, is big news.

The Center for American Women and Politics is the go-to think tank for all information about women's political participation, and in a Jan. 2 press release it announced that, with Tina Smith sworn in as the new senator from Minnesota, there is a "record number of women in the Senate." There are now 22 women senators, 17 Democrats and five Republicans.

Is that so much to rejoice about? Women fill fewer than 20 percent of the seats in Congress (106 women, also an increase of one from 2016).

Such a sprinkling of women will never fundamentally change the gender-based power norm of American politics until attitudes of both voters and the women running for office change.

There are many excellent organizations working to advance the interests of women in politics: EMILY's List, VoteRunLead and Name It. Change It. The #MeToo movement has generated a combination of anger and energy directed at toppling blatantly sexist people and institutions that persist in media, civil society and—as we may see in 2018—politics.

However, despite the presence of some high-powered women in Congress and in the party executive structures, it is predominantly men in both parties who still decide who runs, who is recruited and who gets funded, supported and then allowed access to important committees.

Kelly Dittmar, an assistant professor of political science at Rutgers University-Camden and a scholar for the center, is guardedly optimistic about how women candidates may do this year. "Most years are not the year of the woman," she said, but she senses something afoot that is not captured by headcounts.

Women, she believes, are on the cusp of finally being able to run campaigns that more authentically portray them as women candidates, with their gender being an added value that they can run on. Not entirely, of course. Female political candidates still often suffer from a double bind: They must be simultaneously

By MARY SANCHEZ
The Kansas City Star

Mary Sanchez is an opinion-page columnist for The Kansas City Star. Readers may write to her at: Kansas City Star, 1729 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, Mo. 64108-1413, or via email at msanchez@kcstar.com.



feminine enough and masculine enough to appeal to voters.

She points to the relatively few times that Hillary Clinton in her campaign pointed to her gender as an added asset.

"Clearly, I'm not asking people to vote for me simply because I'm a woman," Clinton said in July 2015, before going on to add, "I think one of the merits is I am a woman."

In previous campaigns, such language would not have been encouraged because it might turn off voters. What has changed, Dittmar said, is that the sexual assault scandals, combined with the stagnation that has come to typify the "do-nothing" Congress, have created a general willingness to see women as the solution.

There is a history of women being appointed or elected to fill slots vacated by men who have behaved badly. The current climate of men falling to sexual harassment allegations certainly qualifies, and seats continue to open at a healthy pace.

Those are opportunities for female candidates, especially if they do not have to run against incumbents, always an uphill battle for a newbie.

Here is where stereotypes can help. Women are perceived by voters as more ethical than men. Consultants often feel that voters will be more open to a women candidate because they don't want the same scandal repeated, Dittmar said.

That fact could dovetail well with the increasing interest among women to run for elected office. And there is money behind what women want from politics. The Center for Responsive Politics recently reported that the numbers of female donors to federal candidates and committees is booming, up by more than 280 percent.

Again, the real shift could occur if those women aren't treated as just a momentary corrective but rather as a catalyst for deep questioning and even upending of the status quo in politics, which has largely been created by and for men.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The year we argued about the evidence in front of our eyes

We might look back on 2017 as the year we argued about images.

The Trump era began in earnest when the White House contested aerial photographs showing diminished inaugural crowds. The fight over football players kneeling during the national anthem has played out, in part, through Photoshopped memes of NFL stars burning American flags. After Hurricane Harvey devastated Houston, social media users passed around JPEGs of sharks swimming along a freeway. Just how much distance was there between Sen. Al Franken's fingers and Leeann Tweeden's flak jacket? Did Sarah Huckabee Sanders really bake that Thanksgiving pie?

These debates reveal that the relationship between seeing and believing is rarely as simple as the old saying suggests. Even as we strive to maintain a tenuous grip on objective reality in this truth-challenged time, we tend to see what we want to see—and perhaps it's best if we all acknowledge that fact.

After 180 years of living with photographs as part of human experience, we're still not quite sure how to treat them. The estimated 1 billion photographs we collectively take every day have perhaps taught us to recognize, when we pause to think about it, that all images are framed, composed or selected. Yet we still hold them up as the ultimate documentary evidence. ("Pics or it didn't happen," goes the online mantra.) The emotional power of photographs to serve as, in the words of one early observer, "mirrors that remember" causes us to

forget that, at best, images are never the whole truth; at worst, they can tell dangerous lies.

"Nothing can be so deceiving as a photograph," Franz Kafka once said, and the technology of photography has been complicit in this deception from the beginning.

The earliest known photo depicting human activity was itself a work of inadvertent obfuscation. When the man usually credited with inventing photography, Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre, pointed his camera at the Boulevard du Temple in Paris one morning in 1838, the image he developed showed two figures—a shoe-shiner and his client—standing among trees and buildings beside an otherwise empty road. It's a striking image. The view it provides is so bereft of movement that two men present could be the lone survivors of a plague.

That boulevard was in fact bustling when Daguerre took his picture. In the infancy of the art, exposure times were measured in minutes rather than fractions of seconds, and so the horses, carriages and pedestrians going about their business cannot now be seen. Only those subjects that remained as still as the trees or buildings would be recorded by history. Like any photograph, the scene it shows is proof only that a picture had been made, not of what it seems to portray.

As photography became commercial, the deceptive possibilities of this theoretically objective art became a feature rather than a bug. Some enterprising 19th century portrait artists offered to make stereoscopic blended images of young lovers, supposedly providing a glimpse of the faces of their future children. Others promised to touch up their photographs with paint to remove blemishes or make appearances more appealing. When the renowned photographer Mathew Brady took Mary Todd Lincoln's picture in 1861, he allayed her fears that she looked too matronly by making her hands more dainty and shaving a few inches off her waistline.

Not long after, Brady helped photography find its most potent realm for deception on the battlefields of the Civil War. He and other chroniclers of the conflict, including Alexander Gardner, Timothy O'Sullivan and Peter Weaver, are now known to have staged photographs of the dead at Gettysburg.

By **PETER MANSEAU**

Los Angeles Times

Peter Manseau is the author most recently of The Apparitionists: A Tale of Phantoms, Fraud, Photography, and the Man Who Captured Lincoln's Ghost. He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.



The very men rightly heralded as the progenitors of photojournalism were also pioneers of fake news.

In many cases, their intentions were honorable. As the New York Times reported on Brady's and Gardner's work, the photographers succeeded in bringing home "the terrible reality and earnestness of war." Their less scrupulous contemporaries, however, preyed on the widespread belief that photographs provide true depictions of reality. They fed American hunger for a final look at lost relatives via a booming post-war market in ghost pictures, including an infamous image of the alleged spirit of Abraham Lincoln himself.

The inescapability of photographs in our media-besotted and advertising-saturated times makes it difficult to appreciate just how miraculous they must have seemed when they were novelties, and how utterly convincing they were as a result.

Yet insofar as we are now more savvy in our relationship with images, it is only relative to those who saw them with uncomplicated eyes.

Even now, photographs remain beguiling enough that we are only selectively suspicious—and thus selectively naive—inevitably interpreting images through the lens of preexisting beliefs. The possibilities for altering and sharing images far surpass our capacity for detecting deception, and we are left only with our gut feelings and biases to separate fact from fiction. We remain desperate for photographic evidence while unable to trust what we see.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thank you

We are extremely thankful for the prompt and excellent service by the Office of the Mayor. On Jan. 3, 2018, the mayors' staff came around at 11am and completed the job requested before 4pm. The two receptionists also were awesome: very courteous, respectful, efficient, and accommodating.

It is a pleasure to have a leader like the mayor of Saipan, Mayor David Apatang, who is prompt in assisting his community needs.

We are equally thankful to Rep. Jonathan B. Attao for introducing House Joint Resolution 20-1 and to Rep. Donald C. Barcinas, who recognized the historic significance of Saipan dating back to 1937. Our confidence in our productive leaders will always remain.

Once again we extend our gratitude for a job well done.

Marie S.C. Castro

via email

HOW

From Page 10

tion drug weapons in that war now reach similar stratospheric prices as Luxturna.

But who wants to tell the drug companies to stop because the cost of a cure is too high?

The price of drugs is fair game for debate, in Congress, among insurers, and over the kitchen table of every American.

What's fair? What's gouging? We don't know. Nor do politicians.

The next one may vastly improve life for several thousand people. Or several million.

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LITERARY NOOK

Ludicrous 'hearteries'

By **JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY**

SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

A Diagnosis of Intelligence Induration

Some relatively new fake news medical terms found in a duplicitous diabolic deconstructing diagnosis of 45 incorporating bigly teleprompter tweetology unbound yet despite their serious nature he continues to thrive the first is I '3' - interminable intelligence induration where mumpsimus like qualities continue to persist a vanity laden hardening of the 'hearteries' situation where common sense and integrity refuse to coexist hardening of the 'hearteries' manifests itself clearly with the ludicrous wall, DOCA, and all the Dreamers being closed out, kicked out, good people loved dearly wall construction kickbacks in the plans of schemers minor and major ailments of a moral and ethical nature continue to plague 45 who needs to be put out to pasture.

The Cheeto Tweeto Presidency

(for Trump's shake'n'bake, chocolate shake, chocolate cake) Pause for thought, a remote relationship to a US Presidency may exist on a temporary basis in the dumpy House of White






from electoral votes which is how Cheeto Tweeto got residency his preference for his own golf courses just doesn't seem right passion for fast foods and twelve or more daily sodas sugar free he's reported to watch TV on large screens in almost every room with the exception of Fox he seldom likes news reports he sees he gets upset, calls the media fake, insults them, doom and gloom all the Cheetos and salty sugary snack foods dye his fingers his face and swept hair take a shade of color much the same the smell from the fried chicken and fish sandwiches still lingers no health food for Cheeto Tweeto, a national disgrace and shame as those poor neglected world class White House chefs and cooks search for franchise food recipes and substitute menu cookbooks.

Trump Base Choice: Deconstruction = Rejoice

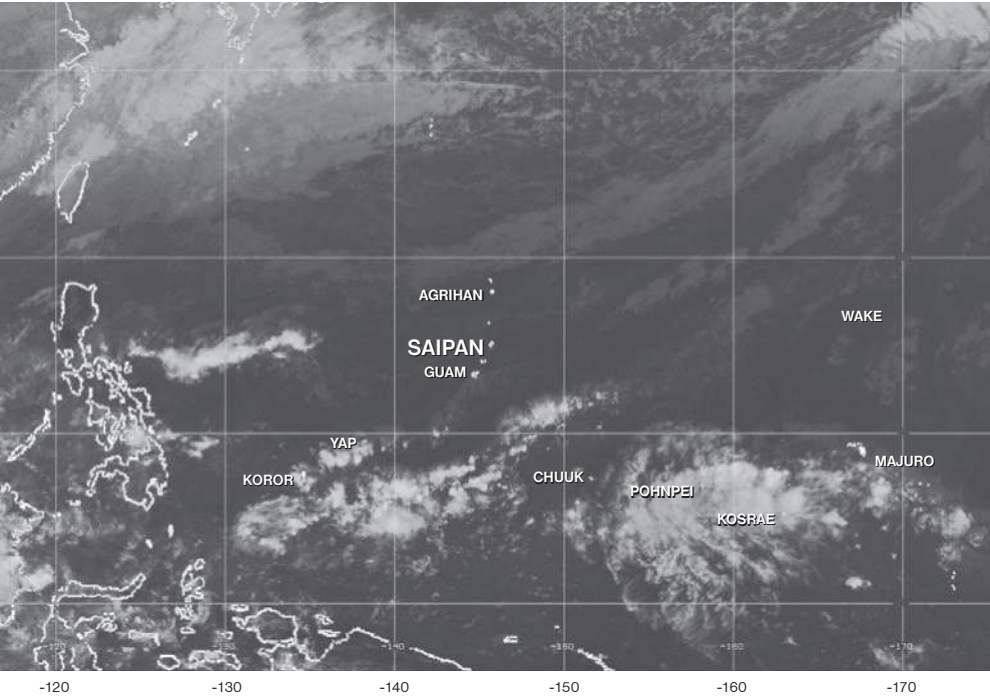
The 35% base has a solid commitment to their elected choice who suffers from ignorance impairment and abusive tweets his every lie in cyberspace and missteps cause them to rejoice while thousands of US and world citizens protest in the streets despite losing by three million votes in the 2016 popular vote Trump supporters found HRC lost and that's all she wrote now democratic values are becoming untethered and float our nation awash in an ocean of misguided deconstruction little more than a nitwit the electoral boss tweets daily twit careless insults right off the top of his yellow fried dyed head and seems seldom the least concerned about the results of it in the Jerusalem capitol location decision people already dead his base wavering around 35% solidly supports president DJT while Wretch 45 spreads the stench of his polluted democracy

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼78°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 10:14 AM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Overall, very few changes were made to the forecast. The shear line has moved south of Guam and mainly a partly cloudy sky is anticipated. With little moisture to work with this week, expect nothing more than isolated showers. High pressure will build into the north Pacific early next week and the pressure gradient between this high and lower pressure to the south will cause an increase in wind for the early portion of the upcoming week.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA ▲ ▼ °F		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE ▲ ▼ °F		
Auckland	Showers	77° / 64°
Beijing	Rain	55° / 54°
Hong Kong	Showers	66° / 64°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80° / 70°
London	Showers	43° / 36°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	69° / 54°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 75°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	70° / 54°
Miami	Showers	76° / 66°
New York	Showers	38° / 35°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	45° / 36°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	52° / 43°
Busan	Windy	43° / 28°
Rome	Showers	61° / 48°
Salem	Rain	56° / 41°
San Francisco	Showers	Showers
Seoul	Sunny	30° / 16°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	55° / 37°
Washington, DC	Rain	40° / 35°



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
6:23 AM	LOW TIDE	0.17
1:12 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.95
7:49 PM	LOW TIDE	0.73
-	-	-

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Tuesday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Wednesday	6:45 AM	6:03 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:03 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:04 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	11:40 am	-
Tuesday	12:05 am	12:21 pm	-
Wednesday	12:56 am	1:02 pm	-
Thursday	1:45 am	1:42 pm	-
Friday	2:34 am	2:23 pm	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017															
DEPARTURES								ARRIVALS							
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)								GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN							
JA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily					UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily				
JA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily					UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily				
JA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota					UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7				
JA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6					UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota				
JA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily					UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily				
JA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily					UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily				
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)								GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)							
JA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7					UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6				
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)								ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN							
JA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7					UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6				
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)								NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN							
DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily					DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)								BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN							
7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7					7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4				
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5					7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7				
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)								SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN							
TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily					7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily				
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1					OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7				
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7					TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily				
J652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7					OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6				
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily					LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7				
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily					7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily				
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)								SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN							
3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7					3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7				
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (GHG)								HANGZHOU (GHG)-SAIPAN							
JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1					JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4				
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4					JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7				
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)								GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN							
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6					3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5				
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)								BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN							
MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7					MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6				
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)								MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN							
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN					UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM				
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN					UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM				
JA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM					OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN				
JA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM					OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN				
JA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM					PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM				
JA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM					UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM				
JA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM					UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM				
JA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR												
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)								HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN							
HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4					OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN				
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN					OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN				
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN					HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7				
U043	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7					U042	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7				
JA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM					U042	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6				
								UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM				
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. <i>(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)</i>															
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.															
SAIPAN TO ROTA								1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily				
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY					1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily				
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily					1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily				
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily					1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily				
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily					1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily				
ROTA TO SAIPAN								1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily				
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY					1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily				
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily					1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily				
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily					1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily				
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily					TINIAN TO SAIPAN							
ROTA TO GUAM								FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY				
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY					2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily				
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily					2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily				
GUAM TO ROTA								2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily				
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY					2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily				
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily					2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily				
SAIPAN TO TINIAN								2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily				
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY					2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily				
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily					2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily				
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily					2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily				
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily					2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily				
								2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily				
								2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily				

14th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 17-18



Tinian youth performing indigenous Chamorro dances draw a crowd at the 13th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival in February 2017 in the Marianas. The 14th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held on Feb. 17-18, 2018.

MVA



Performers at the 13th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival. The 14th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held on Feb. 17-18, 2018.

MVA

The 14th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held over Presidents Day weekend on Feb. 17-18, 2018, highlighting the island's famously potent "donni sali" pepper.

Air service to Tinian is provided by Star Marianas. Available hotels on island include

Tinian Ocean View Hotel, Fleming's Hotel, Lorilynn's Hotel, Tinian Street Motel, and Green Lion House Hotel, and some hotels offer airport shuttle as well.

"The Tinian Hot Pepper Festival has become a quick President's Day weekend get-

away for people looking for a chance to just unwind, enjoy some good island vibes, and have a change of scenery," said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "We are looking into the possibility of again providing boat ferry service from Saipan, and we look forward to a great turnout."

The event is also co-organized by the Tinian Mayor's Office, the 16th Tinian Municipal Council and sponsored by MVA members. Activities will include the road/off road 65K Pika Bike Race on Feb. 17 at 6am, cooking competitions, indigenous craft sales, and live entertainment including cultural dances.

Sample a variety of local dishes, catch the *umang* (hermit crab), join numerous sports activities (including

possess, or consume tobacco products and electronic cigarettes from 18 to 21 years of age.

The policy is consistent with DoD's policy on tobacco use and states that DoD resale activities, including Morale, Welfare and Recreation points of sale, located on Guam will not sell or distribute tobacco products or electronic cigarettes to persons under 21 years of age.

Tobacco cessation is a priority of the DoD, critical to the health, fitness, wellbeing, and readiness of DoD personnel. (PR)

Bordallo on the passing of former mayor Duenas

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU) issued the following statement regarding the passing of former mayor of Tamuning, Connie Duenas: "I join the people of Guam in mourning the passing of mayor Connie Duenas. She was a dedicated public servant who worked to improve our village of Tamuning-Tumon-Harmon, and the broader community during her tenure. Her involvement in village events and service in public safety were testaments of her leadership and commitment to the people she served. My thoughts and prayers are with Juan, their children and entire family during this difficult time. I extend my deepest condolences." (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Military training at Warning Area 517, FDM

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 during the following dates and times:

■ Jan. 8, from 8:30am to 5pm

■ Jan. 10, from 8:30am to 6pm

■ Jan. 11, from 10:30am to 3:30pm

The military will also conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla during the following dates and times:

■ Jan. 8, from 8:30am to 5pm

■ Jan. 10, from 8:30am to 6pm

■ Jan. 11, from 10:30am to 3:30pm

■ Jan. 12, from 11am to 3pm

It is recommended the public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. W-517 is activated south of latitude 12° 40' 00"N. Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of the island. (PR)

DoD adopts Guam's smoking age rule

ASAN, GUAM—Effective Jan. 1, 2018, the Department of the Defense voluntarily enacted a policy that aligns with the new Guam law that raises the minimum age to purchase,

beach volleyball), cook your best *kadun pika* (spicy stew), cha-cha to the championship, arm wrestle, or join the *donni sali* eating competition, itself. Festival times will be from 2pm to 11pm on both days.

"The beaches at Tachogna, Taga Beach, and Kammer Beach are available for those who loves to camp," said MVA Field Operations supervisor Vida Borja. "Power, showers and toilets are conveniently located onsite for campers' use."

Tinian is accessible within minutes of Saipan via airplane or via connecting flights from Rota and Guam. For more information, contact the MVA Tinian office at 433-9365, email Borja at vbjorja@mymarianas.com, or visit the Marianas Events Calendar at www.mymarianas.com. (MVA)



The famous "donni sali" is the star of the annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival. The 14th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held on Feb. 17-18, 2018.

MVA

Saipan Marathon opens online registration

Runners can now register online at www.webscorer.com for Saipan Marathon 2018 on March 10, 2018.

The Marianas Visitors Authority has opened online registration and encourages all runners to register by the early bird deadline of Feb. 12, 2018, for the best price and to guarantee inclusion in the official race booklet.

Saipan Marathon 2018 will again include a 10K, Half Marathon, Full Marathon, and 50K Ultra Marathon courses.

Two separate registration pages are open and participants should register under their respective page at www.webscorer.com by searching Race ID No. 122827 for SAIPAN MARATHON 2018 (US & CNMI) registration or Race ID No. 122811 for SAIPAN MARATHON 2018 (INTERNATIONAL) registration.

Also, for the first time, three registration dates will be set to encourage early registration. Early registration by Feb. 12, 2018, for the 50K and marathon is \$55 for U.S. and CNMI participants, and \$45 for half-marathon and 10K participants. The fee for high school and junior high school students will be \$30 (student ID required). Those who register by Feb. 12, 2018, will be included in the event booklet.

Registration by Feb. 23, 2018, for the 50K and marathon is \$65 for U.S. and CNMI participants, and \$55 for half-marathon and 10K participants. The fee for high school and junior high school students will be \$40.

Registration by March 8, 2018, for the 50K and marathon is \$95 for U.S. and CNMI participants, and \$85 for half-marathon and 10K participants. The fee for high

school and junior high school students will be \$55. The last day to register for the event will be on March 8, 2018.

Registration will include the awards banquet, a finishers T-shirt, and a certificate of completion.

"For convenience of on- and off-island participants, the MVA is pleased to make online registration available in English for the first time this year," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "For many years, we have registered participants online in Japan, where a majority of runners have come from. We now expand that convenience to our English-speaking markets. Furthermore, we anticipate that all future sporting events organized by the MVA will offer this option. We encourage everyone to register by the early bird deadline of

Feb. 12 for the best price."

All competitors are required to pick up their race packets in person on March 9, 2018, from 4pm to 6pm at American Memorial Park, without exception. The start will start and finish at American Memorial Park, starting at 4:30am for the 50K Ultra Marathon, at 5am for the Full Marathon, at 5:30am for the Half Marathon, and at 6am for the 10K. The cut-off time for the 50K and marathon will be 9:30am near the intersection of Navy Hill and Chalan Pale Arnold Road.

Cash payments only are being accepted at the MVA office located in on Beach Road in San Jose, Saipan. For a direct link to the online registration site or for more information, contact MVA Community Projects specialist Ed Diaz at 1(670) 664-3210 or email ediaz@mymarianas.com. (MVA)

Business

Takata adds 3.3 million air bag inflators to massive recall

DETROIT (AP)—Japanese air bag maker Takata is recalling an additional 3.3 million faulty air bag inflators as it expands the largest automotive recall in U.S. history.

The latest recalls cover frontal air bags in certain 2009, 2010 and 2013 vehicles made Honda, Toyota, Audi, BMW, Daimler Vans, Fiat Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Jaguar-Land Rover, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Subaru and Tesla. Au-

tomakers will provide specific models in paperwork that will be filed later this month with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Notices of the expanded recalls were posted Saturday [on the agency's website](#).

Takata uses the chemical ammonium nitrate to create a small explosion and fill air bags quickly in a crash. But the chemical can deteriorate when exposed to high humidity and temperatures and

burn too fast, blowing apart a metal canister. That can hurl hot shrapnel into unsuspecting drivers and passengers.

At least 20 people have been killed worldwide and more than 180 injured.

The latest recalls are part of the largest series of automotive recalls in U.S. history, with 19 automakers having to recall up to 69 million inflators in 42 million vehicles. The problem brought a criminal conviction and fine against Takata and

forced the Japanese company into bankruptcy protection.

The recalls, which are being managed by NHTSA, are being phased in over the next three years. Older models and those in states with high humidity and temperatures are getting priority.

Many automakers have been slow to replace the potentially

deadly inflators. A report by an independent monitor said that as of Sept. 15, 2017, automakers have recalled 43.1 million inflators. Of those, only 18.5 million, or 43 percent, have been replaced even though Takata recalls began in 2001.

NHTSA has said the Takata recalls are unprecedented in size and complexity and have

resulted in groundbreaking lessons that will help automakers reach their repair goals. The agency said it is monitoring the automakers' progress and working to expand best practices to boost completion rates. The agency also has the authority to fine automakers that don't make recall repairs in a timely manner.

Malaysia OKs new search by private company for missing plane



In this March 6, 2016, file photo, well wishes are written on a wall of hope during a remembrance event for the ill fated Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysia's government said Saturday that it has approved a new attempt by a private company to find the wreckage of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, nearly four years after its disappearance sparked one of aviation's biggest mysteries.

The Houston, Texas-based company Ocean Infinity dispatched a search vessel this past week to look in the southern Indian Ocean for debris from the plane, which disappeared March 8, 2014, on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 227 passengers and 12 crew members.

The governments of Malaysia, China and Australia called off the nearly three-year official search last January. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau's final report on the search conceded that authorities were no closer to knowing the reasons for the Boeing 777's disappearance, or its exact location.

"The basis of the offer from Ocean Infinity is based on 'no cure, no fee,'" Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said Saturday, meaning that payment will

be made only if the company finds the wreckage.

"That means they are willing to search the area of 25,000 square kilometers (9,653 square miles) pointed out by the expert group near the Australian waters," he said.

However, he said, "I don't want to give too much hope ... to the (next of kin)." He said his government was committed to continuing with the search.

He did not offer other details. Ocean Infinity said in a statement that the search vessel Seabed Constructor, which left the South African port of Durban on Tuesday, was taking advantage of favorable weather to move toward "the vicinity of the possible search zone."

In the initial search for the plane, a 52-day surface search covered an area of several million square kilometers (square miles) in the Indian Ocean west of Australia, before an underwater search mapped 710,000 square kilometers (274,000 square miles) of seabed at depths of up to 6,000 meters (20,000 feet). They were the largest aviation searches of their kind in

history, according to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).

Despite other methods such as studying satellite imagery and investigating ocean drifts after debris from the plane washed ashore on islands in the eastern Indian Ocean and the east coast of Africa, the 1,046-day search was called off on Jan. 17, 2017.

However, the ATSB's report said the understanding of where the plane may be is "better now than it has ever been," partly as a result of studying debris that washed ashore in 2015 and 2016 that showed the plane was "not configured for a ditching at the end-of-flight," meaning it had run out of fuel.

The search team also looked back at satellite imagery that showed objects in the ocean that may have been MH370 debris. The report said this analysis complemented work detailed in a 2016 review and identified an area of less than 25,000 square kilometers (9,650 square miles)—roughly the size of the U.S. state of Vermont—that "has the highest likelihood of containing MH370."

Your paycheck may be going up soon because of tax cuts

WASHINGTON (AP)—Millions of working Americans should start seeing fatter paychecks as early as next month, Republican leaders say, as a result of the recently passed tax law.

But the precise timing hasn't been fixed yet. And some employees should be aware that less money withheld doesn't necessarily mean that their tax burden will shrink next year.

The massive Republican tax legislation, signed into law last month by President Donald Trump, kicked in Jan. 1. Billed as a huge benefit for the stressed middle class, it brings the biggest overhaul of the U.S. tax code in three decades, reaching into every corner of American society and the economy. The \$1.5 trillion package provides generous tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest Americans, and more modest reductions for middle- and low-income individuals and families.

A look at how working taxpayers could be affected:

What about those fatter paychecks?

That was the promise from the Republican architects of the tax plan. Deflecting criticism of the deeply unpopular legislation, they insisted Americans will come to love the new tax law when they see their heftier paychecks this year—with less money withheld in anticipation of lower income taxes.

"In February, look at your paychecks, because you'll see the tax relief we delivered," said Rep. Kevin Brady, head of the tax-writing House

Ways and Means Committee.

The Internal Revenue Service says employees could see "changes" in their paychecks as early as February. The agency first has to issue the new withholding tables for employers, reflecting the changes in tax rates for different income levels under the new law. That's expected to happen sometime this month to give companies and payroll service providers—and their computer systems—time to adjust. Such a massive, universal change feels something like turning around an aircraft carrier.

In the meantime, the pre-Jan. 1 tax rates and withholding amounts will continue to apply.

Of course it's complicated

The IRS is "overwhelmed" by the changes in the complex new law and now is trying to get out the most important information first, said Melissa Labant, director of tax policy and advocacy at the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

"The withholding tables are at the top or near the top of the list of priorities," she said.

She asks employees to be patient. One thing they can do: Consider updating their Form W-4 "employee's withholding allowing certificate," filed with their company, to make sure their information is up to date. Labant advises that should only be done, though, after the IRS updates the Form W-4—also timing unknown.

Taxpayers can also use the form to request that their employer withhold additional

taxes. That may make sense if, for example, they have substantial outside income such as interest, dividends or capital gains on the sale of assets or investments.

Don't assume

The tax cuts for corporations under the new law are permanent, while those for individuals and families expire in 2026.

Nonpartisan tax experts project that the law will bring lower taxes for the great majority of Americans, though not all.

But reduced tax rates don't necessarily mean a lower tax bill for 2018. The new law is complicated. There are significant limitations on long-cherished deductions, such as the federal deduction for state income, property and sales taxes. There are new tax credits but other mainstays—like the \$4,050 personal exemption—are gone. The standard deduction is doubled, to \$24,000 for couples, but that means it no longer makes sense for many people to itemize and claim other deductions.

That also means employees can't assume that the new, lower withholding rates will cover everything they owe Uncle Sam for this year.

Next year's reckoning

Taxpayers won't file their 2018 returns until next year, in accordance with normal procedure. That's too late for taxpayers to have refunds in hand, or checks paid to the IRS, under the new law before they vote in the midterm elections this November. Trump and the Republicans are counting on the tax law to give them a boost in the elections.

Dunkin' Donuts scaling back 10 percent of food, drink menu

CANTON, Mass. (AP)—So long strawberry banana smoothie. Goodbye steak and egg breakfast sandwich.

Dunkin' Donuts is cutting back on its food and drink offerings. The Boston Herald reports the new, simplified menu is expected to roll out in New England locations start-

ing Monday before expanding nationwide in mid-March.

The Canton, Massachusetts-based company founded in 1950 says the reduction represents about 10 percent of its offerings and is meant to streamline service.

Among the casualties are less popular items and ones

that are time-consuming to make, like smoothies, afternoon sandwiches and certain breakfast sandwiches.

The company announced earlier that it had removed artificial dyes from all doughnuts sold in the U.S. It plans to do the same for the rest of its U.S. food and drink offering by the end of the year.

Nation

Trump washes his hands of insurgency against GOP incumbents

THURMONT, Md. (AP)—President Donald Trump says he's done campaigning for insurgents challenging incumbent Republican members of Congress.

Trump told reporters after meeting GOP House and Senate leaders at Camp David on Saturday that he's planning a robust schedule of campaigning for the 2018 midterm elections and that includes involvement in the Republican primaries. He'll campaign for incumbents,

he said, and "anybody else that has my kind of thinking."

■ ■ ■

President Donald Trump felt compelled Saturday to let the world know he's playing with all his marbles and is among the sharpest cookies around.

In a series of tweets, Trump defended his mental fitness and boasted about his brains, saying he is "like, really smart" and "a very stable genius." It was the latest push-back against a new book that

portrays him as a leader who doesn't understand the weight of his office and whose competence is questioned by aides.

"Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart," Trump tweeted from Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland, a few hours before a strategy session on the 2018 legislative agenda with Republican congressional leaders and Cabinet members.

■ ■ ■

But after a stinging loss in Alabama, Trump said he's done supporting challengers, declaring: "I don't see that happening." Trump had supported Roy Moore after he won the GOP primary. Moore's defeat in the subsequent special election handed Democrats another seat in the Senate.

Trump spent much of Friday and Saturday morning hashing out his 2018 agenda with GOP

House and Senate leaders, top White House aides and select Cabinet members at the presidential retreat at Camp David. He described the sessions as perhaps transformative in certain ways.

A long list of high-stakes topics were on the agenda, from national security and infrastructure to the budget and 2018 midterm election strategy. Though Democrats were not included in the dis-

cussions, the leaders—some dressed casually in jeans, khakis and sweaters—said they were optimistic that more Democrats would be working with Republicans.

"We hope that 2018'll be a year of more bipartisan co-operation," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told reporters, predicting a "significant number of Democrats" would be interested in supporting Trump's agenda.

1 winning Powerball ticket to claim \$570 million jackpot

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—It's been a billion-dollar lottery weekend after a lone Powerball ticket sold in New Hampshire matched all six numbers and will claim a \$570 million jackpot, one day after another single ticket sold in Florida nabbed a \$450 million Mega Millions grand prize.

The winning Powerball numbers drawn Saturday night were 12-29-30-33-61 and Powerball 26.

The Powerball jackpot was the nation's seventh largest.

The Florida Lottery says the winning Mega Millions ticket was bought at a 7-Eleven convenience store in Port Richey. The retailer will receive a

\$100,000 bonus for selling the winning ticket.

The winning numbers to claim the Mega Millions jackpot were 28-30-39-59-70-10.

The jackpots refer to the annuity options for both games, in which payments are made over 29 years. Most winners opt for cash options, which would be \$281 million for Mega Millions and \$358.5 million for Powerball.

The odds of winning the Mega Millions jackpot are one in 302.5 million. Powerball odds are one in 292.2 million.

The identity of either winner was not immediately available. However, under Florida law, the Mega Millions winner cannot remain anonymous.

The winner has 180 days from the date of the drawing to claim the prize. However, to elect the one-time, lump-sum cash payment option for \$281.2 million the claim must be filed within 60 days, according to lottery officials.

The winner's name, city of residence and details on the winnings can be made public; however, the winner's home address and telephone numbers are to be kept "confidential."

According to the website, only three Mega Millions jackpots have been larger than the most recent grand prize: a jackpot of \$656 million in 2012; a jackpot of \$648 million in 2013; and \$536 million in 2016.

Trump says he'd be open to talking with North Korean leader

THURMONT, Md. (AP)—President Donald Trump, shelving comparisons about the size of a "nuclear button," said Saturday he is open to talking with the North Korean leader he's called "Little Rocket Man" and hopes some progress results from upcoming talks between the Koreans.

Trump, who last year lambasted his chief diplomat for talking about negotiations with the nuclear-armed North, told reporters at Camp David that some dialogue or direct conversation with Kim Jong Un was not beyond the realm of possibility.

"Sure, I always believe in talking," Trump said. "Ab-

solutely I would do that, I wouldn't have a problem with that at all." But he was quick to add that any talks would come with conditions, which he did not specify.

The first formal talks between North and South in more than two years are set to take place in a border town Tuesday as the rivals try to find ways to cooperate on the Winter Olympics in the South and to improve their ties. Tensions are high because of the North's nuclear and missile programs.

"Right now they're talking Olympics. It's a start, it's a big start," Trump said during a question-and-answer session after meetings with

GOP leaders in Congress and Cabinet members on the administration's 2018 legislative agenda.

Kim "knows I'm not messing around. I'm not messing around, not even a little bit, not even 1 percent. He understands that," Trump said.

Assessing next week's discussions, Trump said "if something can happen and something can come out of those talks, that would be a great thing for all of humanity. That would be a great thing for the world."

The president also said that he had spoken with South Korean leader Moon Jae-in, who "thanks me very much for my tough stance."

BITTER COLD

Gusty wind picks up snow accumulated on the ground as Jesse Sherwood, of Jersey City, N.J., jogs at Liberty State Park, Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018, in Jersey City. The bitter cold that followed a massive East Coast snowstorm should begin to lessen as temperatures inch up and climb past freezing next week, weather forecasters said.

AP



Asia

Iranian tanker ablaze after collision off China; 32 missing

BEIJING (AP)—An Iranian oil tanker collided with a bulk freighter and caught fire off China's eastern coast, leaving its entire crew of 32 missing, most of them Iranian,

authorities said Sunday.

The missing - 30 Iranians and two Bangladeshis - are all from the tanker Sanchi, which spilled oil and was floating while still burning

early Sunday, said Chinese maritime authorities, which dispatched police vessels and three cleaning ships to the scene.

South Korean coast guard

also sent a ship and an airplane to aid the search effort.

The Panama-registered tanker was sailing from Iran to South Korea when it collided with the Hong

Kong-registered freighter CF Crystal 257 kilometers (160 miles) from shore late Saturday, the Ministry of Transport said.

All 21 members of the

Crystal's crew - all Chinese nationals - were rescued, the ministry said.

It wasn't immediately clear what caused the collision.

TOKYO (AP)—The U.S. Navy has located a transport aircraft deep on the Pacific Ocean floor where it crashed in November, killing three sailors on board.

The C-2A "Greyhound" aircraft, which was traveling to the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan when it crashed the day before Thanksgiving in the Philippine Sea, rests at a depth of about 18,500 feet (5,640 meters), the Japan-based 7th Fleet said in a statement Saturday.

Salvaging it will be the deepest recovery attempt of an aircraft to date, the Navy said.

The plane was located last week by a contracted salvage vessel that deployed a pinger locator that picked up the aircraft's emergency signal. After marking the location, the search team returned to port in Japan.

In the coming weeks, the team will return to the site with a side-scan sonar and remote operated vehicle to map the debris field and attach heavy

US Navy locates crashed plane deep on Pacific seabed



In this Aug. 22, 2017, file photo provided by the U.S. Navy, a C-2A Greyhound assigned to the Providers of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 30, prepares to land on the flight deck aboard the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). AP

lines for lifting the aircraft to the surface, the statement said.

"Despite very challenging conditions, every effort will be made to recover the aircraft and our fallen sailors," the Navy said, adding that the mission was initially delayed by the poor weather.

Eight people were rescued and the dead were identified as Lt. Steven Combs Jr. and Airman Apprentice Bryan Grosso of Florida and Airman Matthew Chialastri of Louisiana.

Elizabeth Combs has said that her brother was piloting the aircraft and managed to settle it in the sea, allowing for the rescue of the eight people. The Navy called Combs' actions "heroic."

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

The 7th Fleet had two fatal naval accidents in Asian waters last year, leaving 17 sailors dead and prompting the removal of eight top Navy officers from their posts, including the fleet commander.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Insurgents attack Myanmar soldiers in Rakhine, wounding 6

BANGKOK (AP)—Six Myanmar soldiers were wounded in an insurgent attack in northern Rakhine state, where government troops have been accused of "ethnic cleansing" that forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to flee into Bangladesh, officials said. The military said in a statement on the commander in chief's Facebook page that the attackers were from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, the militant group blamed for attacks on police posts in August that prompted the crackdown that left thousands of Rohingya dead and more than 650,000 displaced. On Friday, more than 20 insurgents used homemade bombs to attack a truck transporting troops from Taungpyo township in northern Rakhine, the government said in a separate statement on its Facebook page. Six soldiers were taken to a military hospital, border guard police official Sann Oo said by phone Saturday.

Blast kills 4 Indian policemen in disputed Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—

Police said four officers were killed Saturday when rebels fighting against Indian rule in disputed Kashmir detonated a bomb on a street the officers were patrolling. Streets were deserted and shops and businesses closed for a strike when the massive blast struck the northwestern town of Sopore, hitting the police patrol. The town, famous for apple orchards, is observing a shutdown on the 25th anniversary of a massacre in which government forces killed at least 47 people after a paramilitary soldier died in a rebel attack. The strike was called by separatist leaders who challenge India's sovereignty over Kashmir. The town was already on high alert with hundreds of police and paramilitary soldiers patrolling the area in anticipation of anti-India protests and clashes. Police said at least half a dozen shuttered shops suffered extensive damage in the blast, which was remotely detonated.

Multiple avalanches in Indian-held Kashmir kill 11

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Rescuers recovered the bodies of 11 people in Indian-controlled Kashmir on Saturday, a day after multiple avalanches

hit their vehicles in the Himalayan region, officials said. Thirteen people were swept away by three near-simultaneous avalanches at three places in a stretch of about 10 kilometers (6 miles) on a mountainous road in Kupawara district on Friday. Police officer Shamsher Hussain said about 200 police, army and civilian rescuers recovered the bodies of 11 people. Two people were rescued alive and were in stable condition at a hospital, he said. Avalanches and landslides are common in Kashmir and have caused heavy death tolls for the Indian and Pakistani armies camped near the mountainous and forested highly militarized Line of Control that divides Kashmir between the nuclear-armed rivals. At least 20 Indian soldiers were killed in three avalanches last year, and in 2012 a massive avalanche in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir killed 140 people, including 129 Pakistani soldiers.

Indian court jails powerful politician for embezzling funds

PATNA, India (AP)—An Indian court on Saturday sentenced a powerful regional politician to 3 1/2 years in prison on a second conviction

of embezzling state government funds as a top elected official two decades ago. The court found Laloo Prasad Yadav and 15 others guilty of conspiracy to defraud the Bihar state government of 8.45 million rupees (\$130,000). Judge Shivpal Singh sentenced all the convicts to prison terms ranging from 3 1/2 years to seven years. Yadav's conviction will be challenged in an appeals court, his son Tej Pratap Yadav said after the court's decision in Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand state. Yadav already is serving a five-year prison sentence on a conviction in a related case for fraudulently withdrawing 378 million rupees (\$5.8 million) from the Bihar state government treasury for fictitious medicines and fodder for cattle. Yadav has been barred from contesting elections. Yadav spent two months in jail in 2013 before he got bail from the Supreme Court as he challenged his conviction. He was taken to the prison again after his conviction in the second case on Dec. 23.

8 people killed by mortar they tried to open in Philippines

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP) — Eight people were

killed in the southern Philippines when a rusty mortar round they thought was an iron canister with gold inside exploded as they tried to pry it open with a hammer, police said Thursday. Police Senior Superintendent Raul Tacaca said by telephone that five other people were wounded by the powerful blast late Wednesday in a far-flung mountain village of Sirawai town in Zamboanga del Norte province. The explosion happened inside a bunkhouse for workers of a plywood company. One of the workers found the mortar round in a river bank and brought it to the bunkhouse, where other workers and their relatives stayed, and started to try to open it with a hammer, Tacaca said. "They pounded on it, thinking there may be gold inside," Tacaca said. Six of the victims died in the bunkhouse, which was destroyed by the blast, and two others died while being brought to a hospital, he said. Some villagers believed the mortar round may have been a relic of World War II, but Tacaca said it appeared to have been a leftover of clashes between government forces and Muslim rebels in more recent years. Zamboanga del Norte

is one of several coastal areas that were battered by a tropical storm last month that left more than 160 people dead and scores other missing in flash floods and landslides.

Afghan official abducted in Pakistan is released

ISLAMABAD (AP)—An Afghan official abducted in Pakistan last October has been freed by his captors and returned home. Qazi Mohammad Nabi Ahmadi, the deputy governor of Afghanistan's eastern Kunar province, was kidnapped while visiting a doctor in the Peshawar, near the border. No one has claimed the kidnapping, and it's unclear who abducted him. Ahmadi is a member of the Hezb-e-Islami party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former warlord who fought in the 1990s civil war and recently made peace with the Kabul government. Zardasht Shams, Afghanistan's deputy ambassador in Islamabad, said Saturday that Ahmadi had rejoined his family in Kunar. He said the official's brother, Habibullah, who was also abducted, remains missing. The family has been approached for ransom, but it's unclear whether any has been paid.

World

Syrian forces eye rebel-held province after defeat of IS

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian government forces and allied militiamen are advancing on the largest remaining rebel-held territory in the country's north, forcing thousands of civilians to flee toward the border with Turkey in freezing winter temperatures.

The offensive on Idlib—a large province in northwestern Syria packed with civilians and dominated by al-Qaida-linked militants—was expected after the defeat of the Islamic State group late last year. Last week, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said the main military operations against IS in Syria have ended and signaled that the focus would shift to al-Qaida-linked militants.

The Idlib offensive carries significant risks.

The province bordering Turkey is home to an estimated 2 million Syrians, including tens of thousands of people who fled fighting elsewhere. A full-blown government offensive could cause large-scale destruction and massive displacement.

Turkey, a supporter of the rebels, has deployed military observers in the province as part of a de-escalation deal with Iran and Russia, but that has not stopped the fighting on the ground or Russian airstrikes against the insurgents.

It is not clear how far the current offensive aims to



In this photo provided on Tuesday Jan. 2, 2018 by the Syrian anti-government activist group, Edlib Media Center, EMC, which has been authenticated based on its contents and other AP reporting, shows Syrian displaced man and boy who fled from a countryside village of Idlib city, which is under the attack of the Russian and Syrian government airstrikes, sits outside their tent at an informal refugee camp, near Idlib, Syria. **AP**

Another opposition activist based in Hama province, Mohammed al-Ali, said the Russians and the Syrian government are “carpet bombing” villages before pushing into them.

“The Russian airstrikes, weak fortifications and Islamic State attacks in Hama” have all helped government forces, he said by telephone.

Hassan and al-Ali said it is highly unlikely that government forces would march toward the provincial capital, also named Idlib, because it would set up a costly battle with highly experienced and well-armed al-Qaida-linked insurgents. The province is dominated by the Levant Liberation Committee, which claims to have severed ties with al-Qaida but is widely believed to still be affiliated with it.

reach, and recapturing the entire province is expected to be a long and bloody process. Opposition activists say the main target for now appears to be the sprawling rebel-held air base of Abu Zuhour, on the southeastern edge of the province, and securing the Damascus-Aleppo road that cuts through Idlib province.

Over the past two months, troops backed by Russian airstrikes have captured more than 80 towns and villages

in the northern parts of the nearby Hama province and breached Idlib itself for the first time since mid-2015.

The offensive gained more intensity on Christmas Day, when one of President Bashar Assad's most trusted and experienced officers took command of the operation to extend the government's presence toward Idlib and boost security for the road that links

the capital, Damascus, with Aleppo, Syria's largest city.

Brig. Gen. Suheil al-Hassan, also known among his troops as “Tiger,” has led elite forces to many victories against insurgents since the conflict began nearly seven years ago. He has been credited most recently with the defeat of IS in much of eastern Syria, including the months-long battle for the city of Deir el-Zour.

“Conditions on the ground are wretched for the rebels,” said an opposition activist based in northern Syria who asked to be identified by his first name, Hassan, for fear of reprisals by insurgents. He said rebels are stuck in a two-front battle with government forces and remaining pockets of Islamic State militants. He said the Russian airstrikes have exacted a heavy toll.

13 killed, 7 wounded by gunmen in restive Senegal region

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—Gunmen killed at least 13 people Saturday in Senegal who were gathering firewood in the forest, the military said. It was the worst attack in years in the West African nation's restive southern region, where a separatist insurgency has dragged on for more than three decades.

The bloodshed sparked fears of renewed unrest in the area, which had been

relatively calm for the last several years.

Col. Abdoul Ndiaye said late Saturday that seven others were wounded in the massacre 4 miles (7 kilometers) outside of the town of Ziguinchor, and the military stepped up its presence near the town. Casamance is separated from the rest of Senegal by the nation of Gambia.

While no immediate claim of responsibility for the slay-

ings was made, suspicion fell on the separatist group founded in 1982 known as the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance.

The armed wing of the group had agreed to a ceasefire in 2014, and the last major attack blamed on the group had been in 2013 when rebels took 12 employees of a South African bomb disposal firm hostage. The victims, all Senegalese citizens,

were eventually released.

Saturday's deaths came just hours after the release of two prisoners belonging to the separatist group following negotiations that were mediated by the Community of Sant'Egidio.

The separatists have long argued that their region is culturally distinct from the rest of Senegal, and has suffered from inattentive governments in the country's capital, Dakar.

8 migrants dead, 86 rescued from sinking boat off Libya

ROME (AP)—At least eight migrants died and 86 others were rescued Saturday from a smugglers' rubber dinghy after it started sinking in the Mediterranean Sea off Libya, the Italian coast guard said. A search was ongoing to find any more possible survivors.

An aid group not involved in the rescue said dozens of migrants could still be missing. The coast guard said there was no confirmation of Libyan authorities' statement that at least 25 migrants had died.

The Italian coast guard, which coordinates rescues in international waters off Libya's coast, said an aircraft on patrol for a European anti-smuggling operation had spotted the dinghy, which was in difficulty Saturday morning. Italian navy and coast guard vessels were involved in the rescue.

Coast guard Cmdr. Sergio Liardo told Italian state TV RaiNews24 that “it appears the dinghy deflated” after a puncture. When rescuers ar-

rived in the early afternoon, some 20 migrants were still in the dinghy while others were in the water.

All eight victims were female, Liardo said.

Asked about the Libyan navy's account that at least 25 migrants had perished, Liardo said “that's not confirmed.” He said survivors told rescuers that roughly 150 migrants were aboard when the dinghy was launched from Libya's coast.

“We are looking for any eventual survivors,” Liardo said, adding the search would continue through the night.

Authorities say the actual death toll in many of the migrant boats that sink in the Mediterranean is never known, and that some boats vanish without a trace. The smugglers routinely crowd much more than 100 people into motorized rubber dinghies designed to hold far fewer, aiming to maximize profits on the route from lawless Libya toward southern Europe.

US senator says no evidence of ‘sonic attacks’ in Cuba

HAVANA (AP)—Republican Sen. Jeff Flake says the U.S. has found no evidence that American diplomats in Havana were the victims of attacks with an unknown weapon.

Flake, a Senate Foreign Relations Committee member and a longtime leading advocate of detente with Cuba, met Friday with high-ranking Cuban officials including Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez and officials from the Interior Ministry, which oversees domestic security and works with foreign law-enforcement agencies.

The Cubans told Flake the

FBI has told them that, after four trips to Cuba, its agents have found no evidence that mysterious illnesses suffered by U.S. diplomats were the result of attacks.

Flake told The Associated Press on Saturday morning that classified briefings from U.S. officials have left him with no reason to doubt the Cuban account, although he declined to discuss the contents of those briefings.

Cuban and FBI officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Saturday.

Washington says 24 U.S. government officials and

spouses fell ill in Havana in their homes and some hotels starting in 2016.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has said he's “convinced these were targeted attacks,” but the U.S. doesn't know who's behind them. The U.S. has withdrawn most of its diplomats from Havana, citing a health risk, and forced many Cuban diplomats to leave Washington.

Cuba has decried the reductions as an unjustified blow to U.S.-Cuban relations that were restored under President Barack Obama.

“The Cuban Interior Ministry is saying the FBI has told

them there is no evidence of a sonic attack, even though that term is being used, attack, there is no evidence of it,” Flake told the AP. “There's no evidence that somebody purposefully tried to harm somebody. Nobody is saying that these people didn't experience some event, but there's no evidence that that was a deliberate attack by somebody, either the Cubans or anybody else.

“As I said, I won't talk about what I have seen in a classified setting, but nothing is inconsistent with what the Cubans have said, and I think the FBI would say that.”

Focus

Iran's working class, facing dim prospects, fuels unrest

CAIRO (AP)—The Iranian town of Doroud should be a prosperous place—nestled in a valley at the junction of two rivers in the Zagros Mountains, it's in an area rich in metals to be mined and stone to be quarried. Last year, a military factory on the outskirts of town unveiled production of an advanced model of tanks.

Yet local officials have been pleading for months for the government to rescue its stagnant economy. Unemployment is around 30 percent, far above the official national rate of more than 12 percent. Young people graduate and find no work. The local steel and cement factories stopped production long ago and their workers haven't been paid for months. The military factory's employees are mainly outsiders who live on its grounds, separate from the local economy.

"Unemployment is on an upward path," Majid Kiyangpour, the local parliament representative for the town of 170,000, told Iranian media in August. "Unfortunately, the state is not paying attention."

That's a major reason Doroud has been a front line in the protests that have flared across Iran over the past week. Several thousand residents have been shown in online videos marching down Doroud's main street, shouting, "Death to the dictator!" At night, young men set fires outside the gates of the mayor's office and hurl stones at banks.

At least two people have been killed, reportedly when security forces opened fire. Overall, at least 21 people have died nationwide in the unrest so far.

Anger and frustration over the economy have been the main fuel for the eruption of protests that began on Dec. 28. President Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate, had promised that lifting most international sanctions under Iran's landmark 2015 nuclear deal with the West would revive Iran's long-suffering economy. But while the end of sanctions did open up a new influx of cash from increased oil exports, little has trickled down to the wider population. At the same time, Rouhani has enforced austerity policies that hit households hard.

Demonstrations have broken out mainly in dozens of smaller cities and towns like Doroud, where unemployment has been most painful and where many in the working class feel ignored.

The working classes have long been a base of support for Iran's hard-liners. But protesters have turned their fury against the ruling clerics and

the elite Revolutionary Guard, accusing them of monopolizing the economy and soaking up the country's wealth. Many protests have seen a startlingly overt rejection of Iran's system of government by Islamic clerics. Under Iran's Islamic Republic, in place since the 1979 revolution, the cleric-led establishment has considerable power over elected bodies like parliament and the presidency. At the top stands Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has final say on all matters of state.

"They make a man into a god and a nation into beggars!" goes the cry heard in videos of several marches. "Clerics with capital, give us our money back!"

The initial spark for the protests was a sudden jump in food prices. It is believed that hard-line opponents of Rouhani instigated the first demonstrations in the conservative city of Mashhad in eastern Iran, trying to direct public anger at the president. But as protests spread from town to town, the backlash turned against the entire ruling class.

Further stoking the anger

was the budget for the coming year that Rouhani unveiled in mid-December, calling for significant cuts in cash payouts established by Rouhani's predecessor, hard-liner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, as a form of direct welfare. Since he came to office in 2013, Rouhani has been paring them back. The budget also envisaged a new jump in fuel prices.

But amid the cutbacks, the budget revealed large increases in funding for religious foundations that are a key part of the clerical state-above-the-state, which receive hundreds of millions of dollars each year from the public coffers. These foundations, including religious schools and charities, are tied closely to powerful clerics and often serve as machines for patronage and propaganda to build support for their authority.

As he announced the budget, Rouhani admitted his government had no say over large parts of the spending and complained about the lack of transparency over the funds going to the foundations.

"They just take money from us," he said. "If we ask,

'Where did you spend the money?' they say: 'It's none of your business. We spend it where we like.'"

Rouhani's economic program has focused on trying to rein in government spending and build up the private sector and investment.

His policies have managed to pull inflation down from the high double-digits where it long stood, edging it back to 10 percent last month.

After the lifting of most sanctions in early 2016, the economy saw a major boost—13.4 percent growth in the GDP in 2016, compared to a 1.3 percent contraction the year before, according to the World Bank. But almost all that growth was in the oil sector, where exports jumped from around 1 million barrels per day in 2015 to around 2.1 million barrels per day in 2017.

Growth outside the oil sector was at 3.3 percent. Major foreign investment, which Rouhani touted as another benefit of opening to the world, has failed to materialize, in part because of continued U.S. sanctions hampering

access to international banking and the fear other sanctions could eventually return.

Iran's official unemployment rate is at 12.4 percent, and unemployment among the young—those 19 to 29—has reached 28.8 percent, according to the government-run Statistical Center of Iran.

The provinces "face more economic hardship," wrote Brenda Shaffer, an adjunct professor at Georgetown University's Center for Eurasian, Russian, and East European Studies. "Income levels and social services in the periphery are lower, unemployment rates are higher, and many residents suffer from extensive health and livelihood challenges emanating from ecological damage."

The pain has been felt in the capital, Tehran, and other major cities as well. But there it's been more cushioned within a large middle class. Many can ignore those picking through trash for food. However, in December 2016, Iranians, including Rouhani, expressed shock over a series of photographs in a local newspaper showing homeless drug addicts sleeping in open graves in Shahriar, on Tehran's western outskirts.

"Things shouldn't be so expensive that people have to cry out. It was because officials don't care about people," said one Tehran resident, Nasser Nazari, though he added that protests were not the way to react.



AP
Iranian worshippers attend the Friday prayer ceremony in Tehran, Iran, Jan. 5, 2018.

Health & Fitness

Five ways to make your 2017 resolution work in 2018

By ALISON BOWEN
CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS

Y

ou want to be on time. You want to eat better. You swear you'll exercise. That's what you said at the end of 2016 too.

What if you could really, truly tackle last year's resolution for 2018?

When plotting goals, the more targeted the better, says Alok Trivedi, author of "Chasing Success: Lessons in Aligned Performance" and founder of Chicago-based Aligned Performance Institute, where he coaches on performance.

1 Think of things that can be measured. Make a plan to check in every quarter. But personally? He's not too into people making resolutions.

"They set up fantasies, and they don't set up real strategies," he said. To fix that fantasy problem, we talked to experts on how to lay down a plan for success.

Ask yourself what's important to you. "You've got to look at your previous resolutions and ask yourself, 'Is this really a high value to me?'" instructs Trivedi. Take a peek at your

week, and see where you spend your time and energy. That's what you care about. It might be your children, for example. Consider how weight loss might affect your children. Would you be able to play with them more? Would the kids worry about your health less? Use that as motivation to achieve your goal, he said.

2 Lose the shame. One of the first things to do, said St. George, Utah-based Dr. Bradley Nelson, who works with people on topics

like depression and unresolved anger, is to check in with yourself emotionally. Often, people fail at goals because of what he calls self-sabotage.

Ask yourself, "What needs to be released in order for me to accomplish this goal?" or, "Do I deserve to achieve my goal?" Nelson, who penned "The Emotion Code," said we can be too hard on ourselves when we don't achieve goals, so begin with positivity. "Set goals that stretch you, but not so far you might snap," he said. Find and release that emotional baggage.

3 Set realistic and specific goals. You're not going to be on time to everything the very first week you try. If you set an unrealistic expectation, the minute that you fail, you may give up. Immediately changing every item in your diet might be unrealistic. Shifting diet and

exercise involves everything from groceries to finding a gym.

Ken Dolan-Del Vecchio, a Boston author on habits and health, suggests putting a number with the goal. Make your resolutions specific and measurable: "I will take a walk that lasts at least 20 minutes two days each week" or "I will put at least \$25 into my savings account after every paycheck," instead of "I will exercise more" or "I will save more." Write them down, and put them in your purse or wallet.

4 Bring in friends. Bring in people who love you, and encourage them to bug you and check in on your progress. Dolan-Del Vecchio says to choose with care—ask people who respect you and aren't judgmental or prone to gossip. If you have misgivings, don't ask that person. And go ahead, post on social media.

Dr. Indra Cidambi, who works

with recovering addicts as founder of Middlesex, NJ.-based Center for Network Therapy, said she tells clients that sharing goals and progress increases a chance of success. It might feel as if you're advertising that you're vulnerable, she said, but it helps to increase support. "This definitely takes courage," she said.

5 Accept imperfection. Jaime Brenkus might help people lose weight and become fit, but he's not saying to never indulge. "Knowing that you can have a piece of decadent cake and still see results is empowering and sets you up for long-term success," said the Cleveland fitness expert. "A stumble is not a tumble." And don't create an all-or-nothing proposition. Even if things don't pan out as planned, adds Trivedi, "you say that's a great learning experience."



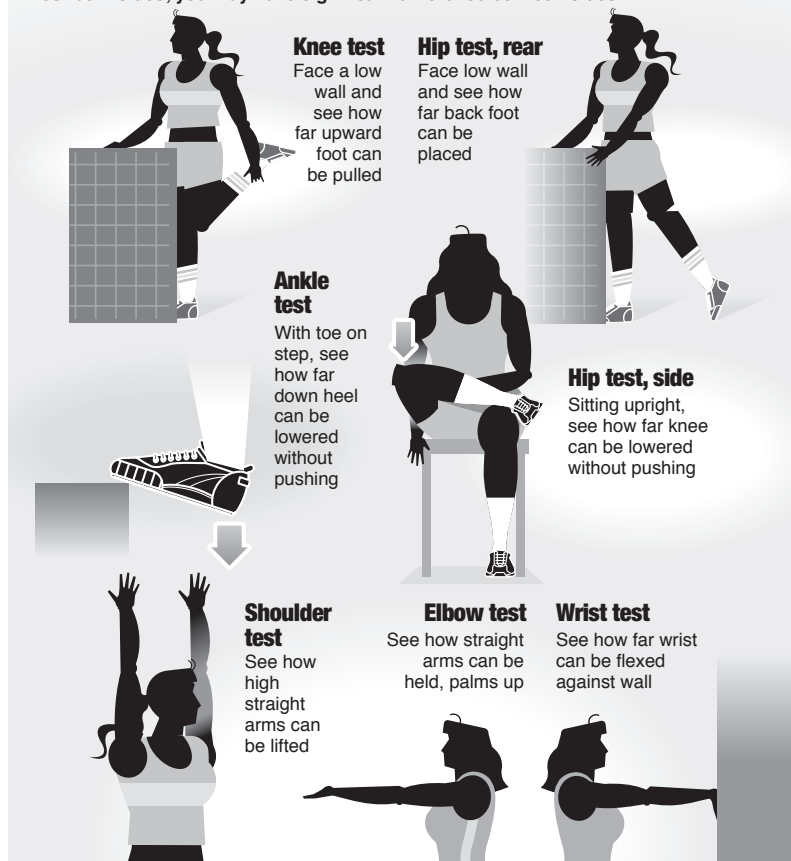
DREAMTIME
Think of things that can be measured when plotting your goals for 2018.

Personal Trainer

Some easy flexibility tests

These tests can be used to monitor improvement when working to improve your flexibility or to judge how well a particular exercise works.

Test both sides; you may have significant difference between sides



Source: The Complete Idiot's Guide to Healthy Stretching
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas and Paul Trap, Tribune News Service

Quinn on Nutrition: Readers letters about diabetes

By BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD/TNS

My recent column about diabetes generated some questions from readers:

Merry, a health educator, questioned my mention of a study in Britain that found a particular pattern of eating—a high intake of vegetables and fruit with limited sugar, white bread and French fries—was associated with a lower prevalence of type 2 diabetes.

"Is this correct?" she wrote. "I am unfamiliar with any diet that lowers the prevalence of type 2 diabetes while eating white bread and French fries."

Sorry for the confusion, Mary. To clarify, this study found that diets rich in vegetables and fruit and with limited amounts of sugar, white bread and French fries were associated with a lower risk for type 2 diabetes. In other words, eating less sugar, white bread and French fries helped lower the risk for type 2 diabetes.

Jerry from Austin writes, "My doctor has diagnosed me as a borderline diabetes patient. Please advise."

My advice? Get thee to a Diabetes Prevention Program, aka DPP. This is a national education program specifically geared to people like yourself who have "pre-diabetes"—blood sugar numbers that are abnormal but not high enough (yet) to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes.

Because this program has been so successful at helping people with



DREAMTIME

Barbara Quinn responds to readers regarding diabetes.

prediabetes to prevent or delay the development of type 2 diabetes, it will become a covered benefit under Medicare Part B beginning in January 2018. Yay!

Ask your doctor or diabetes educator for information about this program in your state. Or go to <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/index.html>.

Sara, a physician assistant who works with children with type 1 diabetes, felt that my recent column—which mentioned news about type 1 as well as type 2 diabetes—could mislead people about the clear distinct differences between these two types of diabetes. "Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune, non-preventable, non-curable disease that does not go away," she stressed.

Sorry for anything that appeared

misleading, Sara. Type 1 and type 2 diabetes are definitely different. In type 1 diabetes, the body turns on itself and destroys the cells that make insulin. People with type 1 rely on multiple shots of insulin daily to survive.

People with type 2 diabetes produce insulin but their body is "resistant" to its effects. Over time, some people with type 2 diabetes may eventually need shots of insulin as well.

At this time, we don't know how to prevent type 1 diabetes. Type 2, however, can sometimes be prevented by changes in lifestyle such as increased exercise, weight loss and changes in diet.

While we still cannot cure diabetes, many of the nutrition recommendations for this disease—all types—are similar. People with type 1 must be especially careful to match their insulin injections with their food intake and exercise. People with type 2 can often control their disease with weight loss and exercise. And for all types of diabetes, maintaining blood sugar levels in a normal range is the best way to control or prevent all the dangerous complications of this disease.

Thanks for writing.

Barbara Quinn is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator affiliated with Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. She is the author of "Quinn-Essential Nutrition" (Westbow Press, 2015). Email her at barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com.

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Life & Style

'Wonder Woman' director Patty Jenkins leads AFI Awards toast

By SANDY COHEN
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—With the American Film Institute's annual luncheon Friday recognizing the best in film and television, Hollywood's awards season is officially underway.

The schmooze-y celebration at the Four Seasons Hotel brought together the casts and creators of 2017's most celebrated movies and TV shows, many of which are also in contention for the Golden Globe Awards on Sunday.

"Wonder Woman" director Patty Jenkins led the honorees in a toast, during which she quoted former Washington Post publisher Katharine Graham (who is played by Meryl Streep in Steven Spielberg's "The Post," an AFI honoree and best picture nominee at the Globes).

"To love what you do and feel that it matters, how could anything be more fun?" Jenkins said. "We love what we do. It doesn't always matter—and often it doesn't—but sometimes it does, so it's always worth it to try."

With winners announced in advance and no trophies to ac-



Tom Hanks arrives at the 2018 AFI Awards at the Four Seasons on Friday, Jan. 5, 2018, in Los Angeles. AP

cept onstage, the AFI Awards are an opportunity for collegial confabulation.

"This is a place to be together as a community," said AFI president Bob Gazzale, "to consider the compendium and feel proud."

Actors, writers, directors and executives embraced the chance to chat, with superstar mashups spontaneously erupting throughout the room.

"Insecure" creator and star Issa Rae greeted Universal Pictures chief Donna Lang-

ley. Jenkins was part of a woman-power trio, chatting with Reese Witherspoon and "Lady Bird" writer-director Greta Gerwig. Witherspoon and "Wonder Woman" star Gal Gadot shared a mutual admiration moment, with Gadot

telling Witherspoon, "I'm such a big fan."

Guillermo del Toro made Spielberg laugh. Actress Saoirse Ronan met "Master of None" writer and actress Lena Waithe. Tom Hanks posed for a photo with "The

Big Sick" screenwriters Kumail Nanjiani and Emily V. Gordon, who playfully gave him posing tips.

Sterling K. Brown rearranged place cards at the "This Is Us" table so he could sit next to costar Chrissy Metz. Sam Rockwell did the same thing at the table for "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," moving himself closer to actress Sandy Martin, who plays his mother in the film.

"Call Me By Your Name" stars Armie Hammer and Timothee Chalamet, both awards-season newcomers, stood together as they took in the celebrity-filled room.

Besides "Wonder Woman," "The Post," "Lady Bird," "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," "The Big Sick" and "Call Me By Your Name," AFI named "The Florida Project," "Get Out," "Dunkirk" and "The Shape of Water" as its top films of 2017. Most are also up for best picture at the Globes.

Oscar-winning filmmaker Haggis accused of rape, sex assault

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A civil lawsuit charging Oscar-winning filmmaker Paul Haggis with raping a publicist has prompted three additional women to come forward with their own sexual misconduct accusations, including another publicist who says he forced her to perform oral sex, then raped her.

One of the other women speaking out told The Associated Press that Haggis tried to sexually assault her. "I need to be inside you," she recalled him saying, before she managed to run away.



Haggis

Another of the new accusers said Haggis held down her arms, forcibly kissed her on a street corner, then followed her into a taxi. She said she later escaped his clutches.

When asked about the new accusations, Christine Lepera, attorney for the 64-year-old screenwriter of "Million Dollar Baby" and "Crash," said, "He didn't rape anybody."

Haggis has denied the original rape allegation in a counter-complaint to the lawsuit, and said the accuser and her lawyer had demanded a \$9

million payment to avoid legal action, which he characterized as extortion.

The plaintiff in the lawsuit, filed Dec. 15 in Manhattan, is identified in court papers as Haleigh Breest. The other three women subsequently came forward to Breest's New York attorneys. They spoke to the AP on the condition that they not be identified for fear of retribution. The AP generally does not identify people who say they were the victims of sexual assault.

On Friday afternoon, Breest's attorneys filed an amended complaint to include details of the allegations lodged by the three new accusers.

Stolen jewels from Venice include 30-carat diamond earrings

ROME (AP)—One was a delicate, tasseled pendant, featuring a flawless 10-carat diamond surrounded by a ring of rubies and diamonds. The other was simpler but no less gorgeous: two pear-shaped 30.2-carat diamond earrings surrounded by smaller, irregular-cut diamonds suspended like starbursts.

The Al Thani Collection on Friday revealed details of the precious jewels stolen Wednesday from a Venetian palace exhibit in a brazen theft that sorely embarrassed Italian security officials. A manhunt has been launched for the thieves, who calmly pocketed the gems and mixed in with the crowd to

make their getaway.

The collection, assembled by Qatar's Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Thani, hasn't revealed the value of the stolen pieces. But news reports have estimated they are worth a few million euros.

Al Thani said the two pieces were designed by Bhagat Jewellers, the exclusive Mumbai jeweler, in 2011 and 2014. Bhagat jewels, known for the unique craftsmanship, quality gems and one-of-a-kind designs by Viren Bhagat, can fetch into the seven figures.

Common to both stolen pieces and Bhagat's style are the unique, minimal platinum settings that make it

look as if the jewels are floating, Al Thani said.

Surveillance footage of the theft Wednesday at the Doge's Palace in Venice show one of the thieves calmly opening the showcase window, as if he had a key, putting the jewels in his pocket and sauntering off while another stands nearby watching.

Police say the alarm was triggered a minute later, giving the thieves time to escape. That makes them think the job was done by professionals who knew what they were doing and what they wanted. A gold necklace in the same display case was reportedly left untouched.

Weinstein sued for alleged scheme to foil misconduct probe

SAN DIEGO (AP)—A lawyer who represented actress Paz de la Huerta has filed a lawsuit against Harvey Weinstein and a former New York prosecutor, alleging they coordinated in a scheme to get the actress to drop her sexual misconduct complaint against the movie mogul.

Aaron Filler's firm, Tensor Law, filed the lawsuit Friday in Los Angeles against Weinstein, his company and attorney Michael Rubin, a former New

York City assistant district attorney for Bronx County.

In the lawsuit, Filler said Rubin misrepresented himself to de la Huerta as a victims' rights advocate, but actually was acting for the benefit of Weinstein "to interfere by a series of harmful subterfuges, threats, and extortion demands, entirely outside the legitimate strictures of the legal system."

The lawsuit accuses Rubin of persuading de la Huerta to

drop Filler as her attorney, and encouraging her to withdraw her complaint alleging Weinstein raped her. She changed lawyers but did not drop the complaint.

Rubin denied the allegations and said that Filler is upset he lost a client.

"I never met Harvey Weinstein in my life," he said.

Weinstein spokeswoman

Holly Baird said in an email to The Associated Press on Saturday that it's "insanity" to suggest that Weinstein "had any involvement in this."

The suit contends Rubin attempted to obtain de la Huerta's psychiatric records to reveal them publicly. Rubin also contacted New

York prosecutors assigned to the de la Huerta case and gave



Weinstein

"false and discouraging advice, leading to the abrupt halt of progress toward indictment of Weinstein," according to the court documents.

Rubin said his intentions were to help de la Huerta get Weinstein arrested.

"I did nothing to try to derail that investigation," he said, adding that he plans to take legal action against Filler for defaming him.

Weinstein has denied any claim of non-consensual sex.

De la Huerta's current law-

yer, Carrie Goldberg, said the actress has nothing to do with the lawsuit.

"My client had no knowledge of this lawsuit filed by Mr. Filler and makes no claims as to the veracity of any of the information presented as facts in the complaint," Goldberg said in a statement Saturday.

The "Boardwalk Empire" actress publicly accused the movie producer of raping her twice in 2010. She began speaking with police in New York about the accusation in late October.

Film company fined in death of a 'The Walking Dead' stuntman

ATLANTA (AP)—A film company faces a citation and fine after a stuntman for "The Walking Dead" fell to his death last year during filming on the hit show's Georgia set, federal authorities said Friday.

John Bernecker, 33, died July 12 from injuries suffered in a fall on the set in Senoia, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) south of Atlanta, Coweta County coroner Richard Hawk said at the time.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration said in a news release that it issued a "serious citation" to Stalwart Films LLC. The agency said it proposed a fine of \$12,675, the maximum allowable fine for a single serious violation, for "failure to provide adequate protection from fall hazards."

"This was a tragic and terrible accident," Stalwart Films said in an emailed statement Friday. "We take the safety of our employees extremely seriously on all of our sets and comply with—and frequently exceed—industry safety standards. We disagree with the issuance of this citation and are considering our response."

The company has 15 business days from the when it receives the citation and proposed penalty to either comply, request an informal conference with the agency's area director or contest the findings before the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, OSHA said in the news release.

A serious violation exists when a workplace hazard could cause an accident that would most likely result in

death or serious physical harm, unless the employer didn't know or couldn't have known of the violation, according to OSHA's website. It carries a less severe penalty than a willful violation, which exists when an employer knowingly failed to comply with a legal requirement or showed indifference for employee safety, or a repeat violation, which exists when an employer has previously been cited for the same or a similar problem.

"This tragedy should serve as a wake-up call for the entertainment industry," OSHA Atlanta Regional Administrator Kurt Petermeyer said in the news release. "The entire industry needs to commit to safety practices for actors and stunt people involved in this type of work."

The citation, dated Wednesday, says the company could have used a number of methods to reduce the risk to those performing stunts on high platforms, including reducing the fall distance, providing personal protective equipment to lower risks or providing spotters with individual crash pads or other equipment to protect performers and help correct an errant fall.

Assistant director Matthew Goodwin told a responding officer that Bernecker fell head-first onto concrete about 22 feet (7 meters) below after appearing to try to grab a railing to stop his fall. Goodwin said Bernecker was supposed to fall from a balcony over a railing onto "a pad made of a layer of 22-inch boxes, port-a-pit pads, and a large pad," according to a report from the Coweta County Sheriff's Office.

Film critics' group chooses 'Lady Bird' as best picture

NEW YORK (AP) — The National Society of Film Critics has named "Lady Bird" the best picture of 2017.

The writer-director of "Lady Bird," Greta Gerwig, won best

director and best screenplay as the society voted in New York on Saturday.

Sally Hawkins won best actress for "The Shape of Water" and "Maudie" and Daniel Kaluuya won best actor for

"Get Out."

The best supporting actress award went to Laurie Metcalf for "Lady Bird" and the best supporting actor award went to Willem Dafoe for "The Florida Project."

"Blade Runner 2049" won best cinematography.

The society is made up of 59 prominent movie critics. Members who are not based in New York were able to vote for the awards online.

Sean Penn, Leonardo DiCaprio share love at Haiti fundraiser

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sean Penn and Leonardo DiCaprio used the eighth annual benefit for the J/P Haitian Relief Organization to publicly praise each other's philanthropic work.

DiCaprio was the guest of honor at the \$15,000-a-plate

fundraising dinner Saturday night in Los Angeles, which raised more than \$3.5 million for Penn's Haitian Relief Organization.

DiCaprio was recognized for his 20 years of work sup-



Penn

porting environmental causes through his namesake foundation. Penn called the actor "a great inspiration." DiCaprio said the same of Penn, citing him as an inspiration and role model.

Brad Pitt, Susan Sarandon, Lena Dunham, Garcelle Beauvais, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Emilia Clarke and Kit Harington were among the guests at the gala dinner at Milk Studios, which concluded with a performance by singer-songwriter James Taylor.

Barack Obama to be David Letterman's first Netflix guest

NEW YORK (AP)—David Letterman has lined up former president Barack Obama to be his first guest when he returns to a TV talk show later this month.

Obama will join Letterman

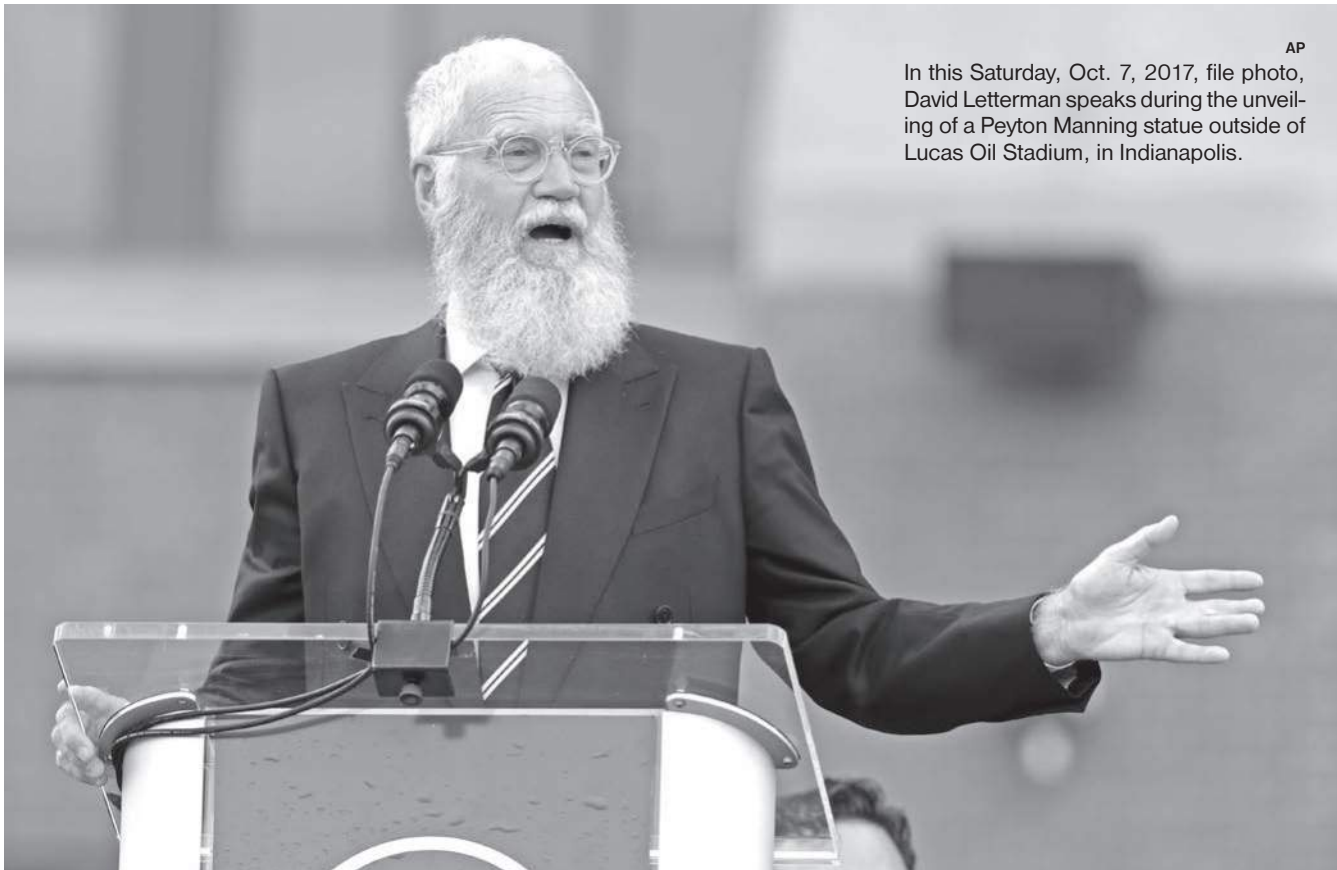
on Jan. 12 for the launch of the new "My Next Guest Needs No Introduction with David Letterman" on Netflix.

Other guests slated to be on the show include George

Clooney, Malala Yousafzai, Jay-Z, Tina Fey and Howard Stern. In each hour-long episode, Letterman will conduct a long-form conversation with a single guest and explore topics

of his own outside the studio.

It will be the first talk show Letterman has hosted since he stepped down from CBS' "Late Show with David Letterman" in May 2015.



AP
In this Saturday, Oct. 7, 2017, file photo, David Letterman speaks during the unveiling of a Peyton Manning statue outside of Lucas Oil Stadium, in Indianapolis.

Eighth-grader issues warning after friend shares nude photo

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing to you about an experience I had that might be useful to girls my age and older. I'm in eighth grade and I'm friends with more boys than girls. Because I'm a tomboy, fitting in with them is easier.

Today in manufacturing class, I was hanging out with my friend "Ian." We were in a larger group of boys and he started bragging about how this girl had sent him a topless photo. He then proceeded to pull up the photo and pass it around.

I was a little shocked, but I realize people my age don't always make smart decisions (sharing a nude photo). Adults around us always tell us not to send photos to people you don't know and never to send inappropriate pictures. That lesson sure hit home with me when Ian showed around the one he has.

I want to caution other girls not to do this. Pictures don't stay as private as you might think. I feel bad for that poor girl!

SAW TOO MUCH IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR SAW TOO MUCH: Thanks for a great letter. Nobody likes to be lectured to, and adults already do enough of that. I hope your message will resonate with other young women because it's an important one.

DEAR ABBY: I have a question about etiquette. I recently encountered a counselor I had gone to for many years. We

exchanged the normal social amenities, and nothing was said about any therapy issues.

Abby, she holds a special place in my heart. I hadn't seen her in five years. She didn't look well at all. In fact, she looked awful. I was shocked.

Although I was concerned, I said nothing because I didn't know the correct way to handle the situation. What can I say to her to let her know I care?

APPROACHING IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR APPROACHING: Drop your former therapist a note, telling her what a difference she has made in your life and that she will always hold a special place in your heart. Explain that you were concerned when you saw her—and ask if there is any way you can be helpful, because you would very much like to be. Do not go into detail about how awful she looked, and don't expect her to start a social relationship with you. If she's well enough to practice her profession, doing so might be considered unethical.

DEAR ABBY: My husband's older brother comes over every few weeks to do his laundry. While he's here, he helps himself to my snacks. My husband's younger cousin also comes over every now and then to do his laundry and eat (at our expense or my labor).

We are better off financially than both of them, but I think

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

the way they mooch off us is inconsiderate. My husband says it's normal and that's how family is. But we don't do that in MY family, nor do we arrive anywhere empty-handed. Are his family using us, or is this normal?

TIRED OF IT

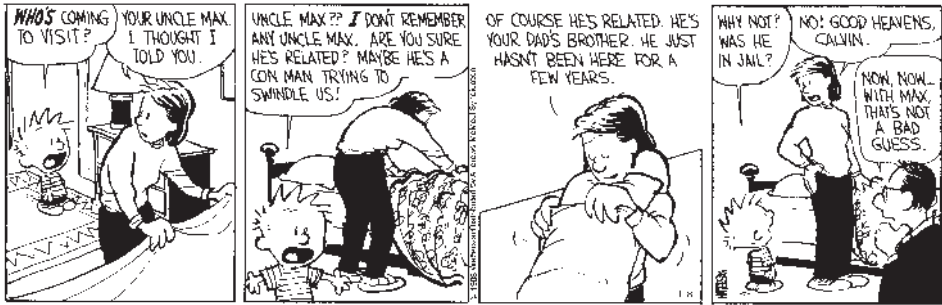
DEAR TIRED: It's normal for your husband's family. Make an attempt to schedule these clothes-washing sessions at your convenience, and stash your snacks someplace you know the relatives won't find them.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



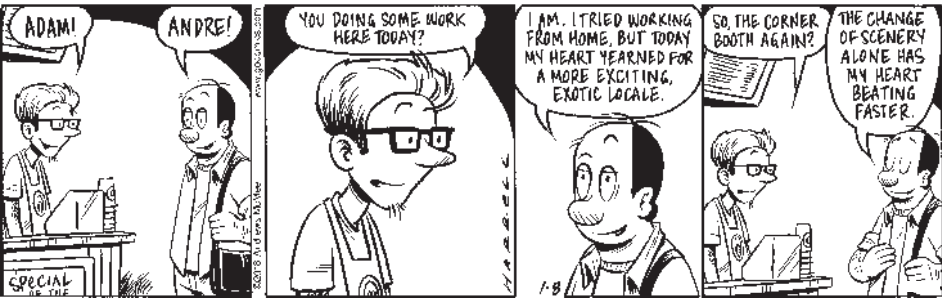
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Last Friday's Answer 01-08

46 Mauna —

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Gaby Hoffmann, 36; Sarah Polley, 39; Stephen Hawking, 76; Shirley Bassey, 81.
Happy Birthday: Reason will be required this year. Make sure you are part of the solution and not part of the problem. Seeing things clearly and being able to separate your emotions from situations that need to be looked at honestly will be the deciding factor in how well you do. Opportunity is heading your way, but handling it properly is what's most important. Your numbers are 2, 9, 13, 24, 35, 39, 48.
ARIES (March 21-April 19): Question everything. Certainty will be the key to whatever decision you have to make. Refuse to let personal matters affect your performance at work. Relationships will undergo inevitable changes. Take care of yourself and your interests first. ***
TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Remain grounded regardless of what others do. Your common sense and practicality will play a role in the way things develop as your day unfolds. A positive change is heading your way and greater opportunities will be made available. ***
GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't fall for a deal that sounds too good to be true. There will be other offers if you look around. Money and emotions will not mix, and joint ventures will leave you at a loss financially. Do your own thing. *****
CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't let your emotions take over when dealing with a relationship concern or personal

matter. Be open to suggestions and willing to compromise. Take a thoughtful approach to avoid making matters worse instead of better. **
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Change can be good, but not if you go about it the wrong way. Don't upset others. Think before you alter your life or say something that might hurt someone who cares about you. Keeping the peace will encourage better days ahead. ****
VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Forward thinking, precision and detail can help you get things done efficiently, but if you let your emotions take over, causing you to take action based on hearsay, you will face difficulty controlling challenging situations. ***
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll have to be on your toes in order to outmaneuver someone who has been giving you a hard time. Don't leave any room for error or renege on a promise you made. Do your best to avoid discord. ***
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Keep your distance from those asking for handouts. You've worked hard, and although you are compassionate and tend to fight for the underdog, this time it is best to put your own needs first. Focus on physical improvements, creative projects and personal goals. ***
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be careful how you handle your professional obligations. Don't let emotional matters affect your objectivity or cause you to fall short of your goal. Someone is likely to offer you poor information that will lead you astray. ****

EUGENIA LAST
THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY
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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Listen carefully when faced with an emotional dilemma. Don't make rash changes based on little input. Wisdom, diplomacy and a well-thought-out solution are required. Concentrate on your own imperfections, not those of others. **
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): If you have something to say, first think about the consequences. Situations may not be as they appear. Look closely and see if you can detect what's at the root of a developing problem. Patience will be required. *****
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Work the system. Know what you are up against and how you can manipulate things to better suit your needs. Use your charm, astuteness and imagination and good things will come to you. Become the leader or avoid joint ventures. ***
Birthday Baby: You are intense, proactive and tenacious. You are sensitive and passionate.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit EugeniaLast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU
Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

Difficulty Level ★ 1/08

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THE ASTON MARTIN Solution: 14 letters

NSSEVENSPEEDEMN
IWPROBERTRACKOE
TIONOILENOILINE
RTRRRAGELYTSGOR
ACTEBADLRINRNTC
MHSERDASEECAROS
SGNIWTIETAWCRNH
CEVRIGHVBETORNE
AADGAICSAFRHPCU
BRITISHIMDAEEEO
IDNOBLRYFERTCRT
NGRILLEEOIPIIOAF
YTILIGAARLTUSMI
DIFFUSERDOLOOIH
INTENSEMAJCAMCS

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Agility, Airlift, Alloy, Atom, Bamford, Bond, British, Cabin, Care, Cars, Ceramic, Core, Coupe, Diffuser, Digital, Fascia, Grille, Intense, James, Lead, Leather, Lionel, Martin, Monotone, Motif, Power, Race, Rich, Roadster, Robert, Series, Seven, Shift, Sir David Brown, Speed, Sports, Style, Switchgear, Tension, Touchscreen, Track, Virage, Wings

Last Friday's Answer: Benson

To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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is seeking for U.S. qualified workers for the following positions:

(3) GROUND MAINTENANCE
Perform residential and commercial landscaping work including design conceptualization and layout, preparation of plant materials, soil preparation, planting and maintenance. Also performs grounds keeping duties and other related duties as assigned. Minimum qualifications: 3-12 months of related work experience, with a high school or GED diploma.

(1) NURSERY WORKER
Perform residential and commercial landscaping work including design conceptualization and layout, preparation of plant materials, soil preparation, planting and maintenance. Take care of nursery plants, including propagation and maintenance, proper storage and use fertilizer, and proper storage and application of insecticides. Experience with propagation and care of orchids highly desirable, as well as experience with tropical plants and general nursery related duties. Minimum qualifications: 3 months of related work experience, with a high school or GED diploma.

All positions close 5:00pm on Friday, January 19, 2018.
Applications are available at the **Marianas Medical Center**. Applications should include a resume. It should also include a valid Police Clearance no more than 6 months old. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
Wireless Ridge Landscaping is an equal opportunity employer.

WHATZIT Solution: Running out of time

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Gemkell Saipan Corp.
is inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

Boutique Supervisor, Bottega Veneta (1)
High School Diploma or a GED with one (1) to two (2) years of related or applicable work and management experience in luxury retail environment. Must be able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Must be familiar with the POS System.

Inventory Planner (1)
High School Diploma or GED with at least six (6) months retail experience and at least three (3) months of prior receiving, stocking and inventory experience. Must be proficient in Microsoft Office applications (Excel, MS Word, Outlook, Power Point). Knowledge on the following equipment: POS terminal, photocopier/facsimile machine, and other items as necessary to accomplish assigned tasks. Must be able to lift at least 15 pound items and carry it for at least 100 yards, with or without using a trolley, and move up to 50 pound items using a trolley. Must be able to drive Company provided vehicles. Must be able to bend, kneel, crouch, or crawl in awkward positions. Must be able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends.

Sales Associate, full-time (6) and part-time (2)
High School Diploma or a GED with prior work experience in luxury retail sales. Must be able to lift at least 15 pound items and carry it for at least 100 yards with or without using a trolley. Preferably fluent in both written and oral communication in the English and Chinese (Mandarin) languages. Familiarity with the POS System is preferred. Must be able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends.

Interested applicants may send their applications or resumes via email to gemkell_recruitment@tanholdings.com. To be considered, resumes / application documents must be submitted **not later than 5:00PM on January 18, 2018**. Applications for Employment are available at the Century Tours Office, Kanoa Resort. Background checks and pre-employment drug test will be required prior to employment.

Marianas Medical Center

is seeking for U.S. qualified workers for the following positions:

(1) Accountant
Bachelor's degree in Accounting with three (3) years of accounting experience is required. Must be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications, excellent verbal and written communication skills, analytical and problem-solving abilities, and the ability to multi-task in a fast-paced environment is also required. Experience working in a medical field setting is preferred.

(1) Building Maintenance
High school diploma or GED, plus five (5) years of relevant work experience.

(1) Medical Coder & Biller
Must be a Certified Professional Coder (CPC), or a Certified Professional Coder Apprentice (CPC-A) with at least one (1) year of relevant work experience as a Medical Coder and Biller. Must have the ability to understand and assess medical diagnosis and procedure codes. Must be able to compile data, compute fees and charges and prepare claims and invoices for billing purposes. Must have the ability to provide education to physicians and other business personnel regarding medical coding.

(1) Midwife (part-time)
College graduate completion of accredited Midwifery training program approved by the Commonwealth Board of Nurse Examiners (CBNE), with five (5) years of work experience in Midwifery. Must be licensed under Health Care Professions Licensing Board as a Midwife in the CNMI. Must have the ability to work proficiently in a fast-paced clinical environment.

(2) Radiology Technician
College degree in Radiology from a school approved by the Commonwealth Board of Nurse Examiners (CBNE), with two (2) years of relevant work experience as a Radiology Technician. Must have the ability to take, review, evaluate and operate X-Ray, Ultrasound, Mammogram and Echocardiogram equipment. Must be licensed under Health Care Professions Licensing Board as a Radiology Technician in the CNMI. Must have the ability to work proficiently in a fast-paced clinical environment.

(5) Registered Nurse (RN)
College graduate degree in Nursing from a school approved by the Commonwealth Board of Nurse Examiners (CBNE), with two (2) years of work experience as a nurse or working in a similar capacity in a health care or medical setting. Must pass US NCLEX-RN and is licensed as an RN by CBNE. Must have the ability to work proficiently in a fast-paced clinical environment. Ability to speak and translate in the Chinese language is preferred.

All positions close 5:00pm on Friday, January 19, 2018.
Applications are available at the Marianas Medical Center. Applications should include a resume and evidence of education degree(s) and professional licenses claimed. It should also include a valid Police Clearance of no more than 6 months old. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Testing may be required for some positions.
Marianas Medical Center is an equal opportunity employer.

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Falcons show playoff poise in win over Rams



LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Atlanta Falcons jumped to an early 13-point lead before the Rams mounted two swift scoring drives. Los Angeles went to the Coliseum locker room at halftime with just a three-point deficit amid raucous cheers from a home crowd thirsty for playoff success.

And then Matt Ryan and the tough, tested Falcons showed the upstart Rams what post-season poise is all about.

Ryan passed for 218 yards and hit Julio Jones for an 8-yard touchdown with 5:48 to play, and the defending NFC champion Falcons advanced from the wild-card round with a 26-13 victory over the Rams on Saturday night.

Devonta Freeman rushed for an early score and Matt Bryant kicked four field goals for the Falcons (11-6), who spoiled the Rams' first playoff game in 13 years with a methodical performance derived from hard-earned experience.

Atlanta's journey to the Super Bowl last season ended infamously with that blown 28-3 lead against New England. In their first playoff game since, the Falcons allowed no surprises from the NFC West champion Rams (11-6).

"We knew it was a situation we've been through before," Atlanta defensive tackle Dontari Poe said. "We just had to keep playing and use what we've learned."

Jones caught nine passes for 94 yards for Atlanta, which never trailed while winning playoff games in consecutive seasons for the first time in franchise history. Against an opponent that had just six players on its roster with prior postseason appearances, the Falcons' experience showed through.

"I think having gone through these situations, understanding what it's like, the atmosphere, those kinds of things, knowing that it's going to be tough, all those things kind of carry forward," Ryan said. "But at the end of the day, experience or no experience, you've got to execute."

The Falcons advanced to face the top-seeded Eagles on Jan. 13 in Philadelphia.

"Doesn't matter where we're going, we're going," Ryan said. "And that's the most exciting part."

A raucous crowd of 74,300 packed the Coliseum on a crisp evening for the first NFL playoff game in the nation's second-largest city since early 1994. Los Angeles went 21 years without pro football before the Rams returned last season, and the franchise em-



phatically ended a 13-year streak of non-winning seasons this fall with an inspiring run to the Rams' first division title since 2003.

But the Falcons have been

here before, and they showed it.

The Falcons jumped to their early lead by capitalizing on two mistakes by Pharaoh Cooper, the Rams' Pro Bowl kick returner. Atlanta's

offense then chewed up the clock and field position, with the first drive after halftime consuming 8:15.

"To end with a time of possession over 37 minutes, that's

AP
Atlanta Falcons running back Tevin Coleman (26) leaps over Los Angeles Rams inside linebacker Mark Barron, bottom, and defensive end Aaron Donald during the second half of an NFL football wild-card playoff game Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018, in Los Angeles.

hard to do in our league," Atlanta coach Dan Quinn said. "There was a nine-minute drive to start the second half, and I thought that really set the tone."

The Falcons' defense did more than enough to slow down the NFL's highest-scoring offense, harassing Jared Goff into a 24-for-45 performance in his playoff debut.

"They did a real nice job there moving the ball up the field and keeping us on the sideline," Goff said. "That can sure get you out of your rhythm."

Robert Woods caught nine passes for 142 yards for the Rams, but rookie Cooper Kupp scored their only touchdown late in the first half.

Atlanta held MVP candidate Todd Gurley to 101 yards rushing—just 43 in the first three quarters—and four receptions for a mere 10 yards.

The Falcons ruined a celebratory night for the Rams, who rebounded from a rough homecoming season in 2016 with an outstanding debut year under 31-year-old Sean McVay, the youngest head coach to reach the playoffs in NFL history.

"You see why the Falcons are the defending NFC champs," McVay said. "Certainly this is a humbling game."

... This is an experience that we can learn from. But I don't think this game was too big for our guys."

The Rams' offense finally figured it out late in the first half: Goff made several sharp throws on a 79-yard drive ending in Kupp's TD catch, and Sam Ficken's first field goal trimmed the halftime deficit to 13-10.

But the Rams' defense simply couldn't get off the field in the third quarter, whether due to missed tackles or clever play-calling by the Falcons.

Los Angeles trimmed the lead to 19-13 with 10:49 to play, but the Falcons made another drive highlighted by a beautiful 52-yard screen pass from a blitz-avoiding Bryant to Mohamed Sanu.

Jones then caught the sixth playoff TD pass of his career. Goff drove the Rams deep into Falcons territory, but LA turned it over on down at the Atlanta 5 with 2:05 to play. The Falcons stopped the Rams again on downs at midfield with 1:08 left.

Although the Falcons' offense took a step back in production this season, Atlanta chipped away at the Rams' defense throughout the Coliseum return of offensive coordinator Steve Sarkisian, who coached USC here until 2015.

Ryan was methodical under relentless pressure from All-Pro lineman Aaron Donald, repeatedly avoiding trouble and making big throws. Freeman rushed for 66 yards, and Sanu had that key 52-yard gain on a screen pass.

"Great call by Sark," Ryan said.

Titans rally from 21-3 hole to beat Chiefs

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Marcus Mariota did everything he could to help the Titans advance in the playoffs, throwing a crazy touchdown pass to himself, running for crucial first downs and providing the kind of spark that Tennessee needed to rally from a 21-3 halftime hole.

Heck, he even threw a crucial block on the run that clinched the game.

It all added up to a heart-stopping 22-21 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs on Saturday, the first postseason win for the Titans in 14 years and one that will provide some relief—for the week, at least—for embattled coach Mike Mularkey and his remarkable bunch of underdogs.

"Special," said Mariota, whose 205 yards passing included the go-ahead 22-yard

strike to Eric Decker with six minutes left. "I'm part of a great team. I'm part of a group of guys that really believe in each other. And it's something special."

Now, the Titans will find out Sunday whether they're headed to New England or Pittsburgh next.

Derrick Henry added a career-high 156 yards rushing and another score for Tennessee (10-7), while a defense fileted by Alex Smith and the Chiefs (10-7) in the first half pitched a shutout in the second half—dooming the Kansas City franchise to another humiliating postseason defeat.

The Chiefs haven't won a home playoff game since January 1994.

"I'm in shock," Smith said. "The swing at halftime to the final whistle, definitely a

shock. Yeah. Didn't feel like we played up to how we're capable of playing and that's disappointing."

Smith threw for 264 yards and two touchdowns, but most of that came before halftime. He couldn't get going in the second half and misfired on fourth-and-9 at the Titans 44 with just over two minutes to go, denying the Chiefs a chance for Harrison Butker to kick a go-ahead field goal.

Adding to the depression? Henry appeared to fumble as Tennessee tried to run out the clock.

The Chiefs' Derrick Johnson picked up the ball and returned it for a touchdown with 1:47 to go, and the crowd went wild as fireworks shot off over Arrowhead Stadium. But a replay clearly showed Henry down, the call was overturned and Ten-

nessee succeeded in running out the clock. Mariota threw a block that helped spring Henry for a 22-yard gain on third-and-10 late that helped finish off the comeback.

"Grit. It's just grit," Henry said. "We told them we've got 30 minutes left, all we've got to do is play our game. Execute the plays and everything will take care of itself."

In the first half, the Chiefs looked every bit the team that had won four straight in convincing fashion, and the Titans looked every bit the team that backed into the playoffs.

Kareem Hunt, the league's top rusher this season, plunged in from 1 yard for a 7-0 lead. Smith hit Travis Kelce, who later left with a concussion, with a 13-yard touchdown pass. And he added another TD toss to Demarcus Robinson on the final

offensive play for a 21-3 lead at the break.

"We were feeling good," Johnson said. "We came in 21-3 and that's all we were talking about: 'Finish. Don't get complacent. We have bigger goals than this game.'"

But it was the Titans who finished, and it was Mariota who led the way. He capped a 91-yard TD drive to start the second half in the bizarre fashions: Mariota threw a TD pass to himself.

His throw to the end zone was batted right back at him by Darrelle Revis, and Mariota hauled it in and dived for the goal line. It was the first time a player has thrown a TD pass to himself in the playoffs, and the first time in any game since the Vikings' Brad Johnson during the 1997 season.

"Right place, right time," Mariota said with a smile.

Curry's season-high 45 points lift Warriors vs Clippers



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Points came easily for Steph Curry on Saturday. Eleven in his first five minutes, 17 before the game was 8 1/2 minutes old.

"I just wanted to start off the game right," Curry said. "It's obviously weird starting a game at 12:30pm. You've got to find that energy and something to build momentum, especially early."

He finished with a season-high 45 points without playing the fourth quarter and the Golden State Warriors ran away from the Los Angeles Clippers 121-105 for their fourth straight victory.

"I knew right away, when I got free for a couple of threes in the first quarter and they went down, I got in a rhythm," Curry said. "Beyond that, you just keep your head down and keep shooting and stay aggressive."

Curry took advantage of the guard-depleted Clippers, making 11 of 21 shots, including 8 of 16 3-pointers, going against rookie Juwan Evans and G-League call-up Tyrone Wallace.



Golden State Warriors forward Omri Casspi, center, drives between Los Angeles Clippers forward Sam Dekker, left, and guard Jawun Evans during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018. The Warriors won, 121-105.

In the four games since missing 11 with an ankle injury, Curry has averaged 36 points on 58 percent shooting, 54 percent beyond the arc.

"He's been on fire. Maybe the break was good for him," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "He's been amazing."

Said Curry: "Coming

off the injury, obviously I've got fresh legs, a nice rhythm. I was able to put some good work in the week and a half before I got back on the floor."

The Clippers' Blake Griffin suffered a concussion late in the first quarter when he stumbled driving into the lane from the right wing and hit his head on JaVale McGee's right elbow. Griffin fell to the floor immediately, and remained down for several minutes as team physicians tended to him. He walked off under his own power and went to the locker room.

"Blake's a pretty tough guy, he should be OK," teammate DeAndre Jordan said. "But we definitely want him to be cautious and do whatever he needs to do to be OK."

Nick Young and JaVale McGee each scored 11 points, and Klay Thompson and David West added 10 apiece for Golden State, playing with Kevin Durant sidelined by a right calf strain. The Warriors improved to 17-2 since Nov. 27.

Lou Williams scored 23 points, and Jordan added 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Clippers. They lost their 12th straight to the Warriors, dating to Dec. 25, 2014.

Tyrone Wallace, signed Friday, added 13 points in his first game for Los Angeles.

Tied at 50 with 3:30 left in the second quarter, the Warriors went on a 23-9 run, capping the stretch with Curry hitting a 3-pointer with 8:41 left in a third quarter.

Golden State went up 103-73 on McGee's dunk with 55 seconds in a quarter that would see the Warriors outscore on the Clippers 39-22 for a 103-76 lead with 12

minutes to play.

"We had a big third quarter, which is what we wanted," Kerr said. "At halftime we talked about it. Let's break free and make sure everybody gets out there and plays. That third quarter was important for us, but this was mainly about Steph tonight."

The Warriors won their 10th straight road game, improving their road record to 17-3. Thompson hit a 3-pointer with 1:06 left in the second quarter, extending his streak of games with a made 3-pointer to 94, the longest active run. Andre Iguodala started for the third time this season.

Sam Dekker made his first start of the season. In the first two starts, rookie Juwan Evans has drawn the assignment of guarding Russell Westbrook two nights ago and Steff Curry this afternoon.

Celtics 87, Nets 85

In New York, Jayson Tatum had a driving dunk and a 3-pointer on consecutive late possessions, pulling Boston out of a late hole against Brooklyn.

Playing without Al Horford because of a sore left knee, Boston won its sixth straight heading into its trip to London to face Philadelphia on Thursday.

The Celtics were trailing by one when Tatum got the ball and drove for a powerful slam that gave them an 84-83 lead. Kyrie Irving missed on Boston's next possession but wrestled the ball away from DeMarre Carroll and got it to Tatum in the corner and his 3 made it 87-83 with 45 seconds to play.

The Nets cut it two on Joe Harris' tip and chances to

tie in the final seconds, but missed a series of shots near the basket, with DeMarre Carroll appearing to be injured during the sequence.

Irving finished with 21 points, and Tatum added 14.

Spencer Dinwiddie had 20 points for the Nets.

Cavaliers 131, Magic 127

In Orlando, LeBron James had 33 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists to just miss a triple-double in Cleveland's victory over Orlando.

Kevin Love added 27 points, and Isaiah Thomas had 19 points and four assists in his first start since returning from a hip injury that delayed his Cavaliers debut. Dwayne Wade added 16 points.

Aaron Gordon led Orlando with 30 points, and Elfrid Payton had 20 points and five assists.

Pistons 108, Rockets 101

In Detroit, Tobias Harris scored 27 points and Detroit held off Houston.

Detroit is only four games over .500, but the Pistons have beaten Golden State, Boston, San Antonio, Minnesota and now Houston. The Rockets are without injured star James Harden, but the Pistons were missing their own standout, with Andre Drummond sidelined because of a right rib contusion.

Chris Paul had 16 points and 13 assists for Houston. Ish Smith scored 17 points for Detroit, and Dwight Buycks added a career-high 16.

Bucks 110, Wizards 103

In Washington, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 34 points and 12 rebounds, Eric Bledsoe added 21 points and Milwaukee pulled away late to

beat Washington.

Antetokounmpo also had seven assists to help Milwaukee win for the fourth time in six games and snap Washington's four-game winning streak. Milwaukee guard Matthew Dellavedova was ejected for a flagrant 2 foul on Washington's Bradley Beal midway through the fourth quarter.

John Wall had 16 points and 16 rebounds for the Wizards, but shot 0 for 5 from the floor in the fourth. Bradley Beal led Washington with 20 points.

Timberwolves 116, Pelicans 98

In Minneapolis, Karl-Anthony Towns and Jimmy Butler each scored 21 points, Andrew Wiggins added 20 and Minnesota cruised past New Orleans.

Towns went 7 for 11 from the field and had 16 rebounds for another strong effort after Friday's 25-point, 23-rebound career performance in Boston.

DeMarcus Cousins led the Pelicans with 23 points.

Pacers 125, Bulls 86

In Indianapolis, Victor Oladipo had 23 points and nine assists in three quarters in his return from a right knee injury in Indiana's victory over Chicago.

Oladipo also had six rebounds and five steals to help the Pacers end a five-game losing streak. He missed the previous four games. Domantas Sabonis added 22 points.

Bobby Portis had 15 points Bulls. They've lost four of their last five games.

Kings 106, Nuggets 98

In Sacramento, after preaching patience most of the season, Vince Carter is seeing signs of growth from his young Sacramento teammates.

It certainly helps when the 40-year-old eight-time All-Star can be a part of things, too.

Carter scored 10 of his 12 points in the fourth quarter and the Kings held off the Denver Nuggets.

De'Aaron Fox had 18 points and seven assists, Willie Cauley-Stein added 17 points and Buddy Hield had 14.

"We have a lot of talent around here, it's just patience," Carter said. "They have to learn how to play this game and have to go through all the different scenarios that you could possibly face in an NBA game, and you won't see that until the second part of the season."

Leishman opens with 67 to lead at Kapalua



KAPALUA, HAWAII (AP)—Marc Leishman is having a much better time at Kapalua this year, on and off the golf course.

Leishman, coming off his best year with two PGA Tour victories that helped him become the highest-ranked player from Australia, made eight birdies in a strong wind Thursday on the Plantation Course for a 6-under 67 and a one-shot lead over Brian Harman and Jhonattan Vegas.

Only six players broke 70 in the opening round, a product of trade winds strong enough to cause players to back off putts.

There were a few other wild moments. Leishman thought he hit his tee shot out-of-bounds on the 14th hole, where the wind sent it sailing beyond the waist-high native grass. Just his luck, he wound up in someone's backyard, and it wasn't out-of-bounds. What he figured would be a double bogey off the tee became a par.

"Best break I've had all year," Leishman said after the first round of 2018.

Rickie Fowler sent his approach to the 13th into the native grass, found it and took two hacks to get it onto the green, making double bogey. He bounced back with a pair of birdies and an eagle putt on the closing hole for a 69.

Dustin Johnson and Si Woo Kim also were at 69.

Defending champion Justin Thomas hit his tee shot on No. 12 into the 13th fairway. That was the direction he took at the TPC Boston when he won a FedEx Cup playoff event last fall, but this wasn't on purpose. He still did enough right for a 71.

Thomas played in the final group with Spieth, who wasn't nearly as fortunate. Spieth had never shot over par in his previous 12 rounds at Kapalua. On Thursday, he had to get up-and-down from 167 yards on the downwind, downhill, par-5 18th just to salvage par for a 75.

He attributed it to adjustments he's making with his putting stroke, trying to get it back to where it was a few years ago, and he needs more competitive rounds. That might explain his trio of three-putt bogeys.

Federer warms up for Aussie Open with Hopman Cup win

PERTH, Australia (AP)—As if chasing a 36-year-old wasn't frustrating enough, Roger Federer's rivals now know they're also being outdone by a part-timer.

The Swiss great added yet another feather to his cap by teaming up with Belinda Bencic to win the Hopman Cup on Saturday—17 years after first winning the trophy.

Federer had the crowd enthralled during a charming on-court interview after his singles win over German Alexander Zverev. And he showed he's not only still a master of tennis, but of the humblebrag.

Federer has a knack for making a modest-sounding comment actually draw attention to something he's proud of, and he was in top form in Perth.

Federer managed to mention he's picked up 95 career titles since last winning the Hopman Cup and at one point declared himself better at the net than his tennis rivals when discussing baseline tactics.

But perhaps the response that will cut his rivals most came when he was asked how his training differed from his early days.



AP
Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic of Switzerland celebrate winning the final at the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth, Australia, Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018.



"I've played almost 1500 times so you have to be careful now. So it's nice, I work part time now," he said, the crowd lapping it up.

"I work in the morning, I'm off in the afternoon or I do it the other way around."

"It's good being a dad, good being a husband, good being a tennis player."

"I have the best of all worlds, it's great."

Vintage Federer, and it's part of why we love him so much.

Federer says he is primed and ready to return to the scene of last year's fairytale as

he aims to defend his Australian Open crown.

Federer was entering the unknown at this time last year after spending the previous six months on the sidelines with a knee injury.

The 36-year-old defied his long stint on the sidelines to win the Australian Open, before adding a record eighth Wimbledon crown later that year. Federer will enter this year's Australian Open as the hot favourite, especially with injury clouds still hovering over his main rivals Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic.

Three-time major winner

Andy Murray (hip) and Kei Nishikori (wrist) have already

pulled out.

The 19-time grand slam winner won all four of his singles matches at the Hopman Cup.

"It caps off a great week as a team, but personally for me as a singles player, I played great," Federer said after winning the title in Perth.

"Now I just have to pace myself all the way up to the tournament in Melbourne, and

I'll be ready."

"I'm just excited going back to Melbourne where I had my fairytale run last year. It was crazy."

"It's great to be the defending champion. I take it the right way. I won't put extra pressure on myself, regardless of who's going to play, or not play."

"For me it's just important to be in a good mindset, well prepared, and ready to go. And I feel like I am ready."

Dodgers get Alexander in 3-team trade with White Sox, Royals



KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—The

NL champion Los Angeles Dodgers have acquired left-handed reliever Scott Alexander from Kansas City in a three-team trade that also included the Chicago White Sox.

The White Sox got veteran relievers Luis Avilan and Joakim Soria and cash. The Dodgers also obtained minor league infielder Jake Peter and the Royals added a pair of minor leaguers in the deal Thursday.

The 28-year-old Alexander emerged as a key pitcher for the Royals last season, going 5-4 with four saves and a 2.48 ERA in 58 games. The Dodgers lost durable Brandon Morrow from their bullpen when he signed with the Chicago Cubs, and lefty Tony Watson became a free agent.

Avilan was 2/3 with a

2.93 ERA in 61 games last season for the Dodgers. The 28-year-old lefty struck out 52 in 46 innings.

Soria was 4-3 with one save and a 3.70 ERA in 59 games for the Royals last season. The 33-year-old righty has 204 career saves.

The 24-year-old Peter hit a combined .279 at Double-A and Triple-A in the White Sox organization.

Kansas City got 24-year-old starter Trevor Oaks, a righty who went 4-3 with 3.83 ERA at Triple-A for the Dodgers, and 23-year-old infielder Erick Mejia, a switch-hitter who spent most of the season at Double-A for Los Angeles, batting .278 with 28 stolen bases overall in the minors.

In San Diego, the Padres sent infielder Yangervis Solarte to the Toronto Blue Jays on Saturday for prospects Edward Olivares and Jared

Carkuff, and also signed two pitchers.

The 30-year-old Solarte hit .255 with 18 homers and 64 RBI in 128 games last season for the Padres.

San Diego re-signed right-handed pitcher Craig Stammen to a two-year contract, signed Japanese right-hander Kazuhisa Makita to a two-year deal, and designated infielder Jose Rondon for assignment.

The 33-year-old Stammen was 2/3 with a 3.14 ERA with 74 strikeouts and just 28 walks in a career-high 60 appearances for the Padres last season. He inherited a National League-high 55 runners and allowed just 14 of them to score, including only two with the bases loaded. In 289 career appearances with Washington and San Diego, Stammen is 28-27 with a 3.80 ERA.

CNMI

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Yap are basketball (men and women's), beach volleyball (men and women), canoe/paddling (men and women), table tennis, athletics, indoor volleyball, weightlifting, and swimming (open water swim only). The organizing committee in Yap has given participating nations until Jan. 15 to confirm their entries by numbers, while a chef de mission meeting is scheduled in March.

If all the teams make a final confirmation for the Micro Games, the CNMI's delegation to Yap will be bigger than the one it sent to Pohnpei four years ago.

In the 2014 Micronesian Games, Team CNMI competed only in athletics, weightlifting, swimming, canoe racing, baseball, spearfishing, and men's and women's basketball. The Commonwealth went home with 14 gold medals, 15 silvers, and five bronzes to finish sixth in the medal standings behind Guam (42-27-12), Pohnpei (36-41-37), Palau (36-31-38), Marshall Islands (34-23-33), and Yap (17-23-15) and ahead of Kosrae (4-3-11), Nauru (3-9-5), and Chuuk (3-4-9).

The athletics teams handed the CNMI the most medals (15). The track squad was made up of Rachel Abrams, Lia Rangamar, Denise Samson, Friendly Joy

Pena, Zarinae Sapong, Beo Ngirchongor, Brandon Philip, Dylan Ackerman, Seiya Eda, Michael Mancao, Jason Lampkin, Doris Rangamar, Sylvan Rangamar, Ronald Olopai, Antonio Ichiou, Jesse James, Dan Joab and Jaynard White.

Weightlifters Raymond Santos, David Barnhouse Jr., Leo Apelo, and Salvi Villanueva then delivered 14 more medals, while four came from swimmer Victoria Chentsova, and one from paddlers Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel, James Pedro Aldan Jr., Carter Calma, Benusto Olopai, and Joshua Andrew. Baseball and women's basketball also won a silver and bronze, respectively, for the Commonwealth.

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terfinalists at the lower half of the draw were Australia's Chloe Dumaresq and Penina Kamu of Samoa, and No. 2 seed Aussies Kelly Bishop and Isabella Markovski.

At the top half of the field, only two seeded pairs survived the second round with No. 1 Zali Morrisia and Alyssa Simoncini and No. 3 Mystique Maljanek and Maja Svalina moving forward. Rounding out the quarterfinals cast were the unranked tandems of Tara Aksentijevic and Shaylee Jayde Martin and Erin Lawless and Chelsea McGrath.

In the girls U14 singles,

Kaga also won her first match after sweeping Yang last Friday, 6-3, 6-1. However, Kaga met a tougher opponent in Round 2 in the No. 1 seed Simoncini, who outclassed the Commonwealth player, 6-2, 6-1. With the loss, Kaga was relegated to the consolation draw and has to wait for the results of the remaining matches to know her next foe.

Meanwhile, Kaga's fellow CNMI player Sean Lee, prevailed in his debut in the Margaret Court Cup.

Sean Lean played in the qualifier for the boys U14 singles main draw and stunned No. 9 seed Dylan White, 6-4, 7-5. Next up for Lee was another seeded player in No. 11

Cameron Linn and the Australian denied the former entry to the main draw after cruising to a 6-0, 6-4 triumph. Before sweeping Lee, Linn came from a hard-earned 4-6, 6-2, 10-2 victory against Lee's fellow Pacific Oceania player Chris Maasi of Tonga.

Maasi and Lee then teamed up in the doubles and lost to Sam Park and Dylan Huberth Vaughan. The Aussie pair won in the first set, 4-2, and labored for a 5-4 (4) victory in the second.

The Margaret Court Cup is only Lee and company's first stop in the Land Down Under, as later this week they will go to Wodonga for the 2018 Victorian Junior Championships.

KANOA

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join 670 Sonics XVIII and Sun Palace in a tie for second place behind the undefeated M&M Salas Ol'Aces (4-0). 670 Sonics XVI fell to a 1-3 slate, the same record its sister team 670 Sonics XVII holds, while Saipan Vegas Extreme and Saipan Vegas Elite are both winless after three matches.

Anthony Deleon Guerrero, Warren Ellama, and Seok Jun Yun teamed up in lifting Kanoa Resort to the 10-point win as each tallied double figures. Deleon Guerrero and Ellama registered 15 points each, while Yun chipped in 12. Ellama and Deleon Guerrero found their rhythm in the second half, which started with Kanoa ahead by only 6, 29-13. The duo combined for 20 Kanoa Resort's 27 points in the final 20 minutes of the match, while Yun held the

fort for Kanoa in the first half, making 10 of his 12 markers in that period.

In the girls division game, CTSI had only one player scoring in twin digits, however six more contributed at least 4 points each to hand their team the easy win. Mary Kay Alferos led CTSI with her 10 points, while Diane Pablo, Nanaka Watanabe and Jam Alegre added 6 apiece, and Chanel Espinosa and Angie Ito logged 4 each.

With multiple players hitting the board for CTSI, it opened a 22-9 advantage after the first half and never relinquished the double-digit lead in the second.

Shirley's Coffee Shop failed to mount a comeback and end its losing skid, as only Jeralyn Castillo stepped up for the team, firing a game-high 16 points. Mikky Vargas had 4, but her baskets came when the game was already decided.

Meanwhile, games in the holiday caging will resume

today with Saipan Vegas Elite and Saipan Vegas Extreme playing in the first match at 5pm. Other pairings tonight are *Marianas Variety* vs IT&E at 6pm; *Fiesta Resort* vs CTSI at 7pm; and 670 Sonics XVIII vs Kanoa Resort at 8pm.

First Game

Kanoa Resort 56 — Deleon Guerrero 15, Ellama 15, Yun 12, Gamab 5, Santos 4, Tenorio 1.

670 Sonics XVI 46 — Contreras 12, Dancel 11, R. Bernardo 8, Chavez 7, B. Bernardo 2, Lagmay 2.

Scoring by halves: 29-23, 56-46.

Second Game

CTSI 42 — Alferos 10, Pablo 6, Watanabe 6, J. Alegre 6, Espinosa 4, Ito 4, Echavez 2, Diaz 2.

Shirley's 24 — Castillo 16, Vargas 4, Manganti 2, Francisco 2.

Scoring by halves: 22-9, 42-24.

MP United at 1st Ota International Football Tournament

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



MP United Football Club's U12 team (in pink tops) plays defense during one of its games against a Japanese squad in the 1st Ota International Football Tournament held in Tokyo, Japan late last month.



MP United FC's Richie Castro talks to his fellow players while waiting for the start of the awards ceremony.



MP United FC coach Gene Weaver, far left, watches the match from the sidelines, while his other players and fellow team officials also look on.



An MP United FC player thanks organizers of the tournament.



Former CNMI National Team coach Kiyoshi Sekiguchi, second left, welcomes the MP United FC delegation.



The top performers of the tournament pose with their awards and the event's hosts.



Participants in the two-day tournament wait for the start of the awards ceremony.



The participating players and coaches in the Dec. 23 to 24 tournament gather for a group photo.



Falcons show
playoff poise
in win over
Rams

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Curry's season-
high 45 points
lift Warriors vs
Clippers

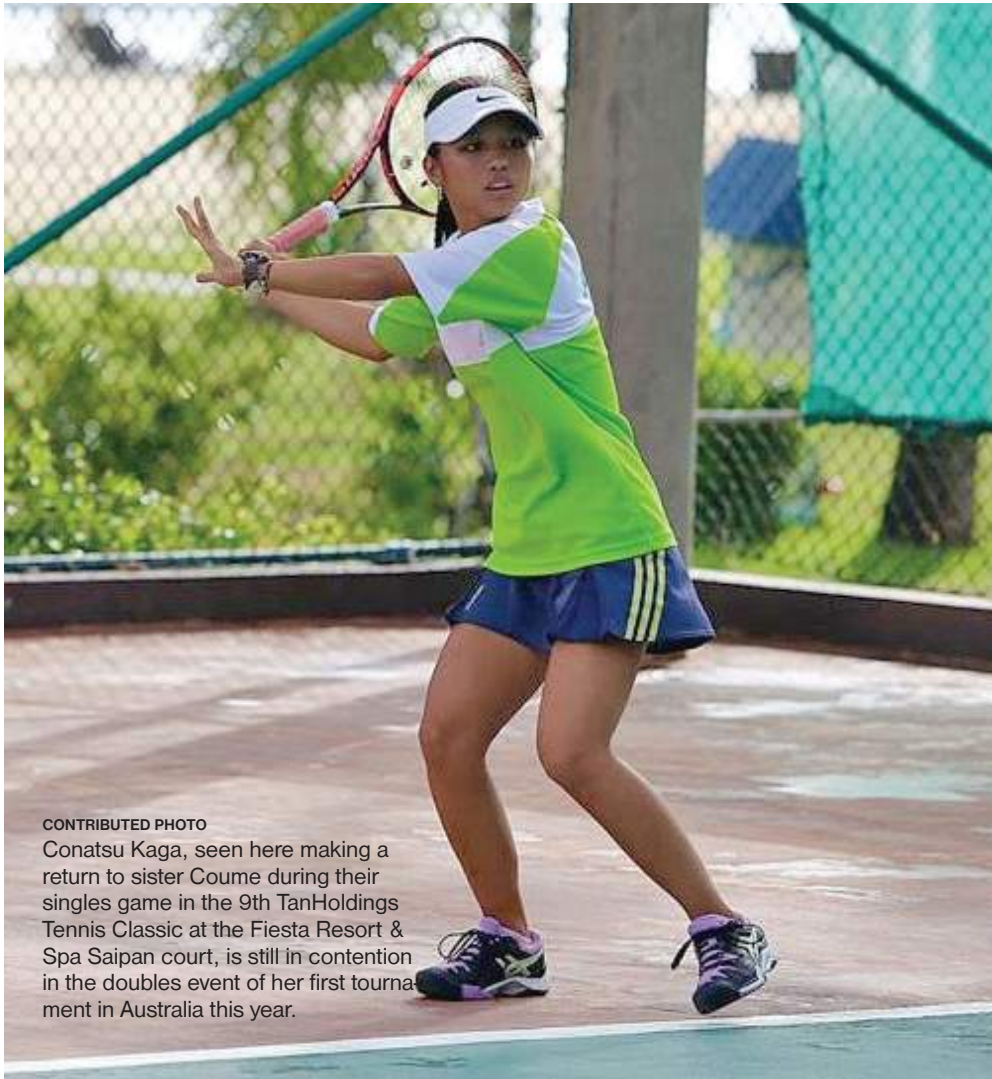
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Conatsu still in contention



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Conatsu Kaga, seen here making a return to sister Coume during their singles game in the 9th TanHoldings Tennis Classic at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan court, is still in contention in the doubles event of her first tournament in Australia this year.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI's Conatsu Kaga is still in the race for the girls U14 doubles crown in the Margaret Court Cup after winning her opening match last Saturday at the Albury Grasscourts in New South Wales, Australia.



Kaga and her partner, Zorika Morgan of the Solomon Islands, were paired against Australia's Camron Goss and Laura Peart and needed only two sets to advance to the next round, 4-2, 4-2. The Pacific Oceania Touring Team players are at the bottom half of the draw and after winning their first match they will challenge the No. 4 seed tandem of Sharika Nemelipu and Celina Yang, also of Australia.

Nemelipuri and Yang eased past compatriots Saskia Kozloe and Callison Row in the first set, 4-1, before eking out a 5-3 victory in the second to make it to the quarterfinals. Other quar-

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Kanoa, CTSI get third win

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Victory No. 3 came in a handy for CTSI and Kanoa Resort as they posted double-digit winning margin in their respective matches in the 2017 TanHoldings Christmas Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

In the girls division game, CTSI walloped Shirley's

Coffee Shop, 42-24. CTSI, with its 3-1 record, kept the No. 3 spot in the team standings behind the unbeaten GSM Lady Ol'Aces (5-0) and Fiesta Resort (4-1), while Shirley's is at the bottom of the rankings in the six-squad field with its dismal 0-5 slate. IT&E (1-3) and Marianas Variety (1-3) complete the group.

In the boys division, Kanoa Resort downed 670 Sonics XVI, 56-46, to improve its mark to 3-1 and

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

CTSI's Chanel Espinosa takes off for a layup in front of two Shirley's Coffee Shop defenders during the second half of their game in the 2017 TanHoldings Christmas Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Team CNMI to compete in 9 sports in Micro Games

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Team CNMI will be fielding teams in nine sports in the 2018 Micronesian Games, which will be hosted by Yap mid this year.

Leading the Commonwealth's delegation is the

baseball team, which faces a tough task of ending the CNMI's back-to-back bridesmaid finishes in the well-loved sport in the region. The CNMI lost to Guam in the gold medal game in Pohnpei in 2014, 6-14, and to Palau in 2010 in Koror, failing to defend the title it last won in 2006 (against



Guam) when the quadrennial meet was last hosted here.

Saipan Baseball League officials Rose Igitol and Tony Rogolifoi confirmed the

group's participation in this year's Micro Games that will run from July 15 to 28, during the Northern Marianas Sports Association meeting last Thursday.

Other sports that are interested in sending athletes to

See CNMI on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Northern Marianas Sports Association officials and members discuss the CNMI's participation in the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap during last Thursday's meeting at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.